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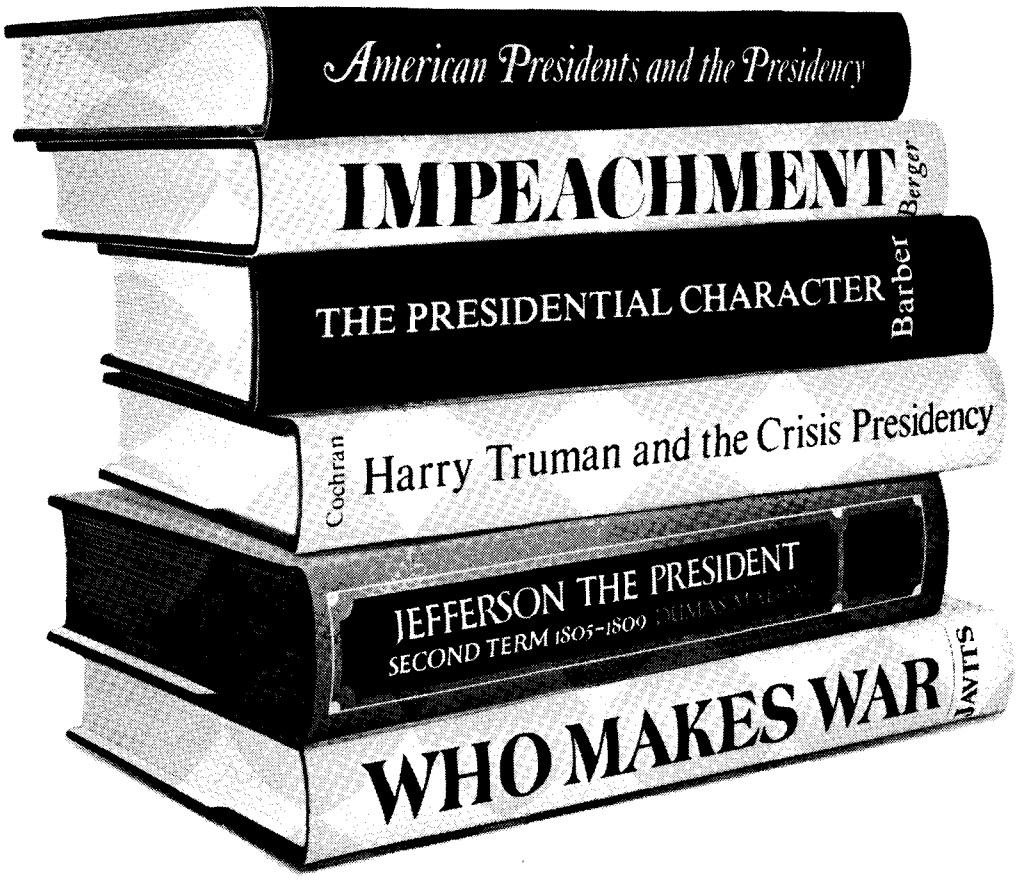

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TRB

from Washington
January 11, 1975

Jerry and Rocky

Ever hear of Daniel D. Tompkins? Why, fie on you! He was Vice President of the United States. He belonged to the same club Nelson Rockefeller has just joined though I don't think his family stashed away a billion. Yes, Tompkins was the one-heartbeat-away man for President Monroe and it would have been the "Tompkins Doctrine," I guess, if the heart had missed.

Other members of the vice presidential club besides Rockefeller are Richard M. Johnson, George M. Dallas and Henry Wilson—remember them? If you feel rather blank, they coupled up respectively with Van Buren, Polk and Grant. I will throw in William A. Wheeler, Tom Hendricks and Garret A. Hobart (Hayes, Cleveland, McKinley)—stout fellows, no doubt, though you won't find their profiles on Mt. Rushmore. And so, after two tries for the presidency and 15 years as governor of New York, Rocky has made it and is a member of the Daniel D. Tompkins Club. I am going to spend all the spare time I can get off in 1975 from wondering how the oil consuming countries are going to pay the oil producing countries, in wondering how Rocky works things out with Jerry.

I have never known a new President who didn't promise that this time the Vice President would be put to work; yes, that this time the spare wheel of the Executive would be rotated. It has never happened, and Lyndon Johnson as veep almost ate his heart out in frustration. When he came to be President he didn't allow any decisions to poor Hubert Humphrey either.

My judgment is that chances are extremely small that Rocky will be assigned any task comparable to his ambition and ability. Still, it might happen; certainly rarely in history have personalities been so ready made for something of this sort. President Ford, for example, is the perfect congressional, organizational man, almost by definition a compromiser and placater; a congressman who became leader because he didn't rock the boat, knew first names and was genuine and friendly. There are 435 members of Congress and they all liked Jerry Ford. Can anything more damning be said about a President?

Nelson Rockefeller wouldn't have been chosen minority leader, probably; he is too competitive; there is a kind of "hiya, fella" elemental force about him that rouses people one way or another—an activist striving for something important to do, for command, some job corresponding to his ability, wealth and immense ambition.

Under a parliamentary system Mr. Ford would make an almost ideal head of state; just the man to reside with his fine family at Windsor Castle, while some pushing politician ran the shop at 10 Downing Street. All the admirable traits in Mr. Ford were on display at his ski vacation in Vail, Colorado where he embodied the better attributes of healthy, normal America—out in below-zero weather, skimming the slopes of new-fallen snow. It took our mind off our troubles . . . the secret service learning to ski . . . I really don't see how the papers could have got through the dull spot between Christmas and New Year's without those Ford photographs from Vail, the winter wonderland.

Here is a situation where a dynamic Vice President might actually play an important role. The relationships of the thing are all against it. There is the natural repugnance of the monarch for the heir-presumptive. There is the jealousy of the regular White House staff for the unattached interloper. There is the ambiguity of the job itself, suspended, as Clinton Rossiter wrote, "in a constitutional limbo between executive and legislature, and in a political limbo between obscurity and glory."

Woodrow Wilson declared in exasperation, "The chief embarrassment in discussing his office is, that in explaining how little there is to be said about it, one has evidently said all there is to say."

Vice Presidents normally "balance the ticket"; what else matters?—

We never speak as we pass by,
Me to Jim Blaine, nor him to I.

The doggerel is supposed to reflect the hostility between the "Plumed Knight" (James G. Blaine of Maine) and his running mate, Sen. John Logan of Illinois, who got second place on the GOP ticket in 1884.

Nixon picked Spiro Agnew because he wanted somebody from the East, somebody who looked respectable, who would please ethnic groups, and also because the Constitution required a running mate. Agnew would be our President today if it hadn't developed that he was a crook.

We are amazingly casual about these things and the procedure almost automatically couples opposites. Wendell Willkie had never met his running mate, Sen. Charles McNary of Oregon 'til they were picked in 1940. Bryan was nominated in 1896 at 36, and that seemed pretty young; they fixed it by nominating a Maine banker, Arthur Sewall, as running mate; he was 81.

According to Mr. Ford's press secretary, he has made "hard and tough" decisions about economy and energy which will be revealed in his State of the Union speech January 20. But did Mr. Ford, or events, make the decisions? If you wait long enough, events make decisions for you. The nation seems almost pleading for the federal government to impose national energy conservation, and to cut taxes to spur the economy; all signs indicate that Mr. Ford has graciously yielded.

Here is a situation where Rockefeller could play an important part. He knows his way around. He has had foreign experience. He has run New York, the most populous state. But the obstacles to putting him to work are great. Mr. Ford can control and fire his everyday staff, but he can't fire the Vice President, who has tenure in the Daniel D. Tompkins Club. Rockefeller's advice might be valuable but giving it requires exquisite tact, even to a man as seemingly uncomplicated as Mr. Ford. Recently Donald Rumsfeld, former Illinois congressman, smart, vigorous and 42, has replaced Gen. Haig as chief of staff. He is in a strategic spot. So Rockefeller's role in a heartbreak job is problematical with history against him: in two centuries the office has been vacant 17 times and for about 37 years we had no Vice President. We never knew the difference.

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Checking The CIA

The Central Intelligence Agency is in deep trouble, for which it is largely but not wholly responsible. Presidents of the United States, the Congress and even the press deserve some of the blame, and life for the agency will get worse before it gets better. After the current spate of stories about alleged domestic CIA spying have run their course, a book is scheduled for publication this spring that supposedly will describe ugly and destructive CIA activities in Latin America over the past 10 years. Since the author is a former agent, the revelations are bound to cause uproars among our good neighbors and will accelerate growing demands for remedial action.

With the help of the White House and friendly legislators, the agency heretofore has been able to ride out criticism. Those charged with the duty of overseeing CIA—congressional subcommittees and the President's foreign intelligence board—have served primarily to defend rather than discipline. By and large the press has connived in this cover-up, out of patriotic sentiment. This time, however, thanks initially to *The New York Times* exposé of illegal domestic snooping by CIA, the situation is different. If President Ford fails to recognize that, he along with the agency will be the loser.

Before discussing what could be done, it is worth reviewing how we got where we are. All prudent governments seek to know what is going on outside their borders, so they can soberly estimate the dangers to their security and prepare to respond accordingly. Sometimes the information they seek must be acquired surreptitiously; thus spying, bugging, bribery, break-ins. It is a nasty, universal business, and once the decision is made to get into it, there can be little public discussion of operational details, even in a democracy. But because these operations involve deceit, invasions of privacy and the exercise of concealed, publicly unaccountable power, a democracy must clearly demarcate the areas in which established intelligence organizations are allowed to roam. It has been thought that Congress set such limits in 1947 when it established the CIA and said it "shall have no police, subpoena, law-enforcement powers or internal security functions." Contrary to congressional intent, however, Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon did permit the CIA to carry out undercover activities within the United States. Agents in Florida prepared for the invasion of Cuba in the late 1950s

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and early 1960s. During that same period CIA used US-based foundations as conduits for its secret funds. It infiltrated such groups as the National Student Association. It set up offices throughout the country that made security checks on persons working with CIA. Its agents questioned Americans returning from abroad on what they had seen or heard.

Since the agency was on the cutting edge of the Cold War throughout its first 25 years, no wonder that its directors and their staffs, privy to all sorts of private intelligence, thought that they, and perhaps only they, knew where danger lay and were tough enough to meet it. It seemed to many in CIA to be a war that required not simply the collection of information, but subversive activities comparable to those of the dictatorial adversary. Foreign parties were financed, foreign publicists and politicians suborned. If the Communist Chinese were arming groups in Laos, CIA would build an opposing Laotian army. If the Communists manipulated elections, our agents would do likewise. During the 1950s and 1960s, the CIA was praised, not criticized, for its role in overthrowing governments in Guatemala and Iran. All this intrigue, productive or not, was thought to be tolerable within the formal charter of the agency.

In 1952 a separate and vast international electronic intelligence network was created—the National Security Agency. Then in 1961 a Defense Intelligence Agency came into being, linking the security and intelligence operations of the military services. In the mid-'60s also, the FBI began to spread itself, and it was to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover that President Johnson turned for inside information on the Dominican Republic. Thus when Richard Nixon entered the White House, the US had a multibillion-dollar, bureaucratically competitive intelligence establishment, and no questions asked.

Police power exercised in secret is intoxicating. It's also dangerous. Whether hired by the CIA, FBI, NSA, the Pentagon or some local police force, agents are not always disposed or qualified to distinguish between legitimate protest and illegitimate violence; between radical dissent and subversion. Yet the distinction is vital, requiring the discrimination to separate those who seek to change the established order by persuasion, and revolutionaries who seek to overthrow that order by sabotage, bombing, kidnapping, murder—all of which are crimes irrespective of motive. Moreover once any agency secretly engages in domestic wiretapping, letter-opening, break-ins or clandestine infiltration, the results may be exactly the opposite of those intended—inviting suspicion, mistrust of authority, disrespect for law. Authority fouls its own nest. That thought was not, however, uppermost in the minds of those in power in Washington in the late '60s and early '70s. Hoover's FBI initiated its "cointelpro" program, using fraudulent means to destroy the livelihoods and reputations of Americans and their organizations. The National Security Agency's electronic nets picked up cables to the US sent by Americans traveling abroad. The Pentagon expanded its counterintelligence surveillance to cover civilian participants in anti-Vietnam war movements. And if current news stories are even partially accurate, CIA did the same.

Bit by bit, activities of the various intelligence agencies have come to be known. Sen. Sam Ervin held extended hearings on the army's domestic spying. The Watergate investigation brought to light a Nixon administration plan to coordinate all domestic intelligence operations—including some that were patently illegal. The Ellsberg trial revealed CIA assistance to California burglars. (The agency denied it.) Hoover's "cointelpro" program was scrutinized by the Justice Department (but it did not want to expose past errors for fear of alienating present bureau agents). Now CIA Director William Colby and FBI Director Clarence Kelley have assured the public that whatever it was that did happen that should not have happened, will not happen again. The reassurances are familiar but meaningless.

How is the truth to be discovered and what is to be done when it is? Neither the executive nor legislative branches is qualified to review the CIA, NSA, DIA or the FBI. The White House is part of the problem. The Congress, by neglect of its oversight function, is not to be trusted. Nor does it make sense for a presidential commission to be established, if it is limited to a study only of the CIA. What is called for is a commission of broad inquiry with membership from Congress and the executive (perhaps even officials of the intelligence agencies involved), but with the majority having no present ties to government.

If it does its job thoroughly, the commission proposed here will address itself to ending duplication, competition and waste. In the specific case of CIA, it will ask and answer this question: how well is the national interest served by continued sponsorship and subsidy of subversion abroad? Repeatedly, the US has burnt its fingers and its bridges to other nations by presuming to decide what kind of governments they should or should not have and by plotting to assure the victory or downfall of this or that faction. Intrusive interference in the internal affairs of others, often clumsily contrived, has contributed to making the United States suspect throughout much of the world. It has compromised our aid efforts, the integrity of our information services and the credibility of our diplomacy.

Commissions can be of two sorts: those designed to bury a subject, and those designed to bring it to the surface and to examine every facet of it. The President would be wise to reject the former and to create the latter.

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Gas Tax?

Returning from their holidays, the President and the Congress face a familiar problem—oil. It was sidestepped last fall when Mr. Ford urged Americans to defy the doomsayers by wearing a WIN button and voluntarily using less fuel. Even as he made the appeal, he must have suspected it was not a solution, for he warned that "mandatory measures" might be needed. The WIN program is fading away as advertising campaigns do, and the time for decision has come. Mr. Ford promises that his State of the Union message to Congress on January 20 will deal with the oil and economic problems in a "tough and hard" way. We shall see what that means.

Will his new energy plan include higher fuel taxes, price increases, forced allocation, price rollbacks, rationing? All these possibilities have been puzzled over for more than a year, yet the government seems no nearer a consensus than it was in January 1974. Each interest group has its favorite solution, and so far the government has done little more than commission studies and ponder alternatives. The most popular idea among the planners is, probably, a hefty increase in the gasoline excise tax, anywhere from 15 to 40 cents a gallon. At different times this approach has been endorsed by Treasury Secretary William Simon, Interior Secretary Rogers Morton and ex-energy administrator John Sawhill. Most of the President's cabinet and nearly all of his energy advisers are said to favor it, though the President himself does not. "We are not going to have it as long as I am in the White House," Mr. Ford said in October. Nevertheless a gas tax still creeps into official discussions, most recently at the prodding of the Joint Economic Committee of Congress. In a special report published last month, the committee staff recommended raising the tax on gasoline 30 cents a gallon so as to reduce oil consumption, and that the anticipated 25 billion dollars in extra revenues be returned to the public in "concurrent rebates" to "avert a harsh deflationary impact on the economy." In effect the committee would have the government take with one hand and give with the other. What would this transfer accomplish? The authors of the report imply that even if every tax penny were returned to consumers, the 30-cent boost would have a psychological "shock effect" and cause people to drive less.

Excise taxes gather money, but they don't necessarily discourage consumption of the taxed item. Liquor and cigarettes are examples. Furthermore though the price of crude oil has quadrupled in the last couple of years, it has had little noticeable effect on driving habits. Energy officials point out that Americans didn't use as much gasoline as was predicted they would in 1974; but what does that prove? Americans also ate less steak in 1974, bought fewer cars and suffered more bankruptcies. If the economy begins to regain its footing, one assumes the old habits will return. The government's summary of oil shipments in November confirms the pessimistic view, indicating that even as they debated ways of saving energy, Americans were becoming more dependent on foreign oil. Statistics published by the Federal Energy Administration show that each day in November the United States produced roughly half a million barrels *less* oil than a year ago and imported three-quarters of a million barrels *more*. A Ford Foundation energy study says that the average American family drives 14,000 miles a year, getting 14 miles on every gallon of gas. That's a consumption rate of about 20 gallons a week. A 30-cent gas tax hike would raise gas expenses for that family from about $10 a week to around $16. Only the poor would feel the pinch, and not much of a pinch if the money were refunded. It seems to us, therefore, that the Joint Economic Committee's plan has little in its favor: it doesn't promise to reduce high-cost oil imports though it does promise to drive prices higher. Its utility as a money raiser is nullified by a rebate to consumers. It's an elaborate sham, designed to trick gasoline buyers into doing what they don't want to do.

If the government is serious about reducing oil imports quickly, it will return to the allocation system of last winter with its waiting lines and odd-even buying days, or adopt rationing. These would have an immediate impact on consumption. A gas tax might be used *in addition* (if the economy can bear another tax) to finance an emergency mass transit program. The United States is not Holland however. Millions of commuters cannot ride the bus or train to work. They will cut back on other expenses before they stop driving. So while any plan to reduce oil consumption over the long term must include wider use of trains and buses, in the short run mandatory constraints on private driving are necessary.

The Arms Race

What It Costs

The modern arms race, in which the United States is far and away the front runner, is a curious phenomenon. Over an average lifetime, each of us will have contributed four to five years' livelihood in support of it. We will have helped thereby to create technology that, if ever used actively in our defense, will efficiently destroy us all.

There are two stand-out features of this race that need little further technical elaboration. One is the enormous growth, worldwide, of lethal power. Both superpowers have a nuclear force capable of destroying the other *several times over*, even after the nation it-

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self has been destroyed as a living society. According to calculations of the Center for Defense Information, the United States alone has a nuclear arms stockpile equivalent to 615,000 Hiroshimas. The global stockpile represents more than 15 tons of TNT for every man, woman and child on earth. The inventory is still accumulating.

In the so-called conventional arms, the build-up is hardly less striking. The proliferation of supersonic jet fighter-bombers, missiles, electronic sensing devices and other advanced weaponry that pinpoint the accuracy and escalate the destruction, is the hallmark of the arms race of the 1970s in many of the poorer, as well as in the highly industrialized countries. The massive application of science and technology to the development of new and more effective weapons has no counterpart in civilian products. In a period of relative peace, the world's armed forces have increased to more than 22 million individuals, each potential fighter possessed of a "conventional" firepower vastly greater than anything known before.

In budgetary terms, the world's annual outlay for national military forces in dollar equivalents now exceeds $240 billion. The third of the world's population living in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia subsists on an annual GNP valued at less than world military expenditures. Six countries (US, Soviet Union, West Germany, China, United Kingdom and France) are the biggest spenders, their combined military budgets amounting to four-fifths of the world total. The United States alone accounts for 35 percent of the total. An estimated $40 to $50 billion of all military expenditures goes to the maintenance and further development of nuclear forces.

But budgetary expenditures are in several respects an incomplete measure of the military burden borne by the economy and the taxpayer. Major military costs, such as veterans' benefits and interest charges on national debts resulting from past wars, are traditionally omitted from "defense" budgets. In the US, according to estimates of the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress, such costs would add 50 percent to what is called our defense budget. Also omitted from these military accounts are many related but unwritten costs, to individuals and to the public treasury, such as the loss of income by young people serving in the armed forces at less than market wages, or the loss of tax revenues on properties used for military purposes. The $240 billion world total is therefore on the low side. Nevertheless the military budget towers above all others. It consumes more tax revenue than is spent in the world for the education of all children of school age, more than one billion of them. It is twice governments' total annual expenditures for the health care of a world population of almost four billion.

What does the world community sacrifice by thus concentrating resources on armed strength? Until that question can be answered satisfactorily, until the comparative returns, to society at large, on investment in military versus social strength can be appraised, we do not have a satisfactory basis for evaluating priorities. Summary figures available from a recently completed study of 132 countries *(World Military and Social Expenditures 1974)* give only a superficial answer, but they help to make more visible the social costs of the pursuit of military power.

A ranking of nations from one to 132 shows that virtually all the major military powers stand considerably lower in indicators of social strength than in military expenditures. The US rates first militarily, but it is fourth among 132 nations in public expenditures per capita for education, fifth in health care. Although it stands first, along with several others, in the achievement of virtually 100 percent literacy, it is 12th in number of teachers relative to its school-age population, 17th in physicians relative to total population, 13th in infant mortality rates. The Soviet Union, second of the superpowers in military strength, is even weaker in its relative standing on these same measures of social well-being.

Neglected needs show up most sharply in the poorer countries of course, where three-fourths of the world population lives. In these 104 countries, annual income averages $240 per capita. Governments spend as much on military forces as on education and health care together. One-third of the school-age population, however, does not attend schools, and more than half the adult population is illiterate. In the poorest of the countries, the number of illiterates rises above 90 percent of the population. Public expenditures for health care equal three dollars per person per year. Infant mortality is 102 per 1000 live births, more than five times the rate in industrialized countries. Half the deaths of children under five years of age are attributed to food deficiencies. On average, there is one physician to 4000 people, and in one-third of the countries the ratio goes above 50,000 people per physician.

"So what's new?," as one Washington columnist asked in commenting on the study of world military and social expenditures. "Is there anybody left who will react to such statistics with anything other than a shrug, at most a wince, perhaps a yawn?" One thing that's new is that in 1975 the social deficit is no longer merely a series of statistics relating to distant poor countries. The comfortable thought that very rich countries could "afford" large military budgets and small wars, that thought ended with Vietnam—as did our confidence that superior military power (being "first") was synonymous with security. As it turned out, the greatest economy on earth, a Goliath with superabundant overkill, proved to be as vulnerable as any to shock waves emanating from small wars and small countries.

The present situation, where we are armed to the teeth but face an economic-social threat against which

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arms are powerless, may bring about a more rational alignment of resources, here and elsewhere. If it does, it will be because more people take the time to assess social goals and costs, are no longer willing to let military power automatically have first claim, and are prepared to say so.

Ruth Leger Sivard

Ms. SIVARD, *formerly chief economist of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, is the author of* World Military and Social Expenditures 1974.

Looking After Mexico

Oil on the Waters

Within the last few months Mexico has emerged as a member of that exclusive circle of nations with oil to sell others. The closely guarded estimates of its government forecast a profit of $480 million this year, and by the end of this decade, the money could fuel major gains in Mexico's economy. An official of Mexico's government-run petroleum industry reportedly joked, "I don't mean we'll ever compete with the Arab countries with their billions. But we might be able to buy back part of Texas or California—for spot cash." Mexico's leaders are making it plain they have no interest in common with the United States in trying to undercut and bring down the high oil prices set by the Arab bloc. The oil money will be too important to a nation straining at both ends of its economy—with an urban middle class facing an inflation rate as bad as that of Japan, while nearly half of the population still lives in rural poverty.

Instead Mexico is already moving a step ahead of the Middle East in its plans for petroleum profits. Three large new refineries are scheduled to be completed in the next five years, and this means Mexico should be able to export low-octane gasoline, diesel fuel, plastics, petrochemicals and other processed products, pulling in extra pesos by eliminating the middleman rather than simply shipping out crude oil.

The large oil fields of Mexico had been long suspected but were never fully developed until world prices shot up like a gusher. Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), the government's oil monopoly, is still drilling to find how much riches lie beneath the land. In the new fields in the southern states of Tabasco and Chiapas, which are located below the Yucatan between the Gulf of Mexico and the border with Guatemala, production has grown ninefold within two years and already accounts for two-fifths of the nation's oil output. Engineers have discovered the same underground rock structure stretches at least 100 miles out into the gulf along the Yucatan's curving western shore, and early results from the first offshore well near Campeche have been encouraging. A PEMEX expert said the offshore pool of oil could turn out to be the largest in the land.

Mexico has become one of the 15 wealthiest in the world in its output of goods and services, but 45 percent of its people still live on the land in a country where agriculture accounts for only 10 percent of that output. And the middle class that has clustered in the cities is increasingly restive over the government taxes to improve the life of the poor. Each outside dollar earned from oil, when turned back into social programs, relaxes the need to get that same money from internal taxes. American observers expect that Mexico will be selling one billion dollars of crude oil a year by 1980 and call their estimate conservative; since PEMEX is predicting exports at half that level by next year alone, it almost certainly is low.

Both the past and the potential are seen in sharp contrast in the Mexican countryside today. In the state of Mexico, where government funds have been used to rebuild the village of Aculco to a gleaming white beauty, with an Olympic-size swimming pool by a hillside, patches of dried manure cling to the stones of the street. As the governor's helicopter lands at the state capital of Toluca, the noise bestirs four sleepy dogs a few feet from the airport strip. Along the highway into the city, three women cross a railroad track with bundles of grain stalks on their backs.

The money from oil that Mexico can put back into more agricultural programs, more schools and more electric power lines is not large in Arab terms. Kuwait, for example, collected 16 times as much profits from oil exports last year as Mexico expects to earn this year. But the petrodollars will help close Mexico's foreign trade deficit quickly. The nation ran more than one billion dollars in the red in its trade last year, offsetting the deficit by long-range borrowing from foreign banks for national investments. The $480 million from oil next year looms as a significant new source for picking up those development costs.

However everything that Mexico buys is going up in price, too. Mexico does not fully feed itself. After drought and floods, it bought large amounts of US wheat and corn in 1974. The heavy machinery for industry also comes from outside the borders. And despite historically low wages, labor has bargained for big jumps the last two years. Mexico's rate of inflation in 1973 and again in 1974 has been pegged at 25 percent—the same as Japan's.

The government has responded last fall with new price controls on food, clothing, automobiles, raw materials, metals and a wide array of products. It also slapped new taxes on the higher-income families as well as on cars, gasoline, liquor, tobacco and luxury yachts. The taxes were meant to dampen inflation and meet the government's rising costs. But the gasoline and automobile taxes were also aimed at aiding oil

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exports by discouraging domestic consumption. Mexico is its own biggest customer for its oil. The smog that clouds the mountain bowl of Mexico City dims the skies. The nation's crude oil production rate is 672,000 barrels a day, and most of that stays in Mexico. Exports were not possible until last fall, when the rate of sales reached 54,000 barrels daily in November.

The government has hiked the price of gasoline at the PEMEX filling stations twice within just a year. From 1.30 pesos per liter, it was raised to two pesos, than again to three pesos. That is equal to a leap from about 40 cents to 90 cents a gallon. A major portion of the money from PEMEX's higher prices at the gas pump will have to go first into the government monopoly's drilling program and its refinery construction. In addition to new refineries outside Monterrey and north of Mexico City, PEMEX is also building a facility on the Pacific Coast, south of the Tabasco oil fields, and will run a pipeline across the isthmus at Mexico's narrowest point to serve that harbor. This may become primarily a Pacific export outlet.

PEMEX's top engineers are also hopeful for another oil strike on the Baja California peninsula in the northwest. After failing twice to find pools there in earlier years, scientists began surveying the Pacific's continental shelf, then moved onshore to the spur that sticks out halfway down the peninsula's west coast. "We may have a basin that may have many, many possibilities," said Francisco Inguanzo, the gray-haired PEMEX production engineer who is considered the father of Mexico's oil industry.

Mexico has given no signal yet that it plans to join the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). A few gentle suggestions that US interests would be served by undercutting the Arabian posted price of $11.65 a barrel (it costs only a dime to produce that barrel) have been met with amusement. Mexico will clearly do what is in its own interest, and that includes accepting the prevailing prices. Anyway it doesn't have enough oil for sale to drive down the world price. At the start of 1974, before the added finds, it had only 0.6 percent of the world's known oil reserves, compared with 1.7 percent for Canada and 2.5 percent for Venezuela (the main outside American sources) and 61.7 percent in the Middle East. Crude oil exports of 75,000 barrels a day are projected for this year—only a drop compared to US needs, but significant for Mexico. The Chamber of Deputies of the Mexican government has voted to put an export tax on petroleum products for the first time—$5.50 a barrel—and income from the levy is expected to bring in $240 million in 1975.

James R. Polk

MR. POLK, *reporter for the* Washington Star-News, *last year won the Pulitzer prize for investigative journalism.*

White House Watch

Ford on Balance

At this writing, 143 days after Richard Nixon said farewell to power and Gerald Ford at the door of a helicopter on the south lawn of the White House and Mr. Ford took his oath as the first President of the United States who had not been elected either to that office or to the vice presidency, a reporter finds that there is at once saddeningly little to say and more than some commentators are saying for the Ford presidency to date.

The judicious time for adding up the score is probably not now but a little later, after Vice President Nelson Rockefeller has had a chance to begin contributing whatever his job and his President allow him to contribute to the administration and after Mr. Ford has delivered or failed to deliver on the big talk of vigorous action and leadership that has preceded his first State of the Union message to Congress. But there is certainly a point in summarizing a White House observer's impressions of President Ford in his introductory period.

This observer's personal impressions are based upon one luncheon with the President, in the company of three White House assistants and four other journalists; the little that was seen of Mr. Ford at a White House dinner for visiting German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt; and the press conferences and other open occasions, at home and abroad, that the American and world publics see on television. To these immediate impressions, of course, must be added the cumulative and second-hand impression that a reporter gets from dealing with the White House staff. It is from that staff and from the statements and actions of the President, most of the latter fashioned for him by his staff and modified by him to varying and generally unknown extents, that a reporter's overall impression of the presidency as distinct from the President is obtained.

My total impression, stated with a second and last reminder that it is offered ahead of Mr. Ford's trial in his State of the Union message and in awareness that it's a very common impression, is that Gerald Ford is an awfully nice man who isn't up to the presidency. Why President Nixon chose him to succeed Spiro T. Agnew in the dying days of the Nixon presidency has never been adequately explained, by Mr. Nixon or anyone else. The obvious explanation, believable until a better one is offered, is that Mr. Nixon knew in late 1973 that he shouldn't risk and couldn't win any serious fights with Congress and that Mr. Ford, a pliant and respected and sensationally undistinguished congressman from Michigan for 25 years, was unlikely to have trouble being confirmed and unlikely to make any additional trouble for the President who had

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nominated him after he was confirmed. Both assumptions, whether or not they were the governing assumptions, proved to be correct.

Here I pause for a reflection upon the act and nature of journalistic judgment. The perpetrator of the foregoing paragraph—I, Osborne—wrote during the presidential campaign of 1968 that Richard Nixon was a repellent character who just might have the makings of a more than adequate President. I also wrote at the end of Mr. Nixon's first year in office that he'd been a better President than I'd thought him capable of being and got myself thanked by various people at the Nixon White House, Mr. Nixon not included. Now here I am, writing that Gerald Ford is an awfully nice man who isn't up to the presidency. There is nothing more to say in this essentially irrelevant connection except that I believed what I wrote about Mr. Nixon in 1968 and early 1970 and am understating, on the polite side, what I believe at the end of 1974 about Mr. Ford's capacity to be President.

Before getting to what little there is to offer here about Mr. Ford's substantive performance, a couple of observations about him as a person may be in order. He's a stubborn cuss. To my limited knowledge he has shown his stubbornness more often in mainly personal decisions than he has in those decisions of public policy that are partly his and partly those of a clutch of advisers who may or may not become known as contributors to the decisions in question. Three examples follow. In the spring of 1974, when Vice President Ford knew but wasn't saying for quotation that he might become President at any time, he took a personal scunner on Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, principally because of what he thought to be Schlesinger's inability to understand and deal with Congress. Schlesinger probably would have been out within weeks if Mr. Ford had succeeded President Nixon then. Before Mr. Ford became President, but well after the springtime of his dislike, he decided for himself that he was wrong about Schlesinger and now you couldn't get Schlesinger out of there with dynamite. The second example is Mr. Ford's reaction to advice that he was getting, from within and outside government, that he was about to make a terrible mistake in visiting Japan, South Korea and the Soviet Union last November when things were beginning to go to pot at home. He said *"I'm going"* in a tone that implied without saying "to hell with *you*." He did go and, in my opinion, it's a good thing he did. The third example, reflected in a nationally distributed newspaper column on December 30, is the view that he should have at least consulted with opposed White House advisers before he took a skiing vacation in Colorado. He likes to ski, he did it in Colorado when he was Vice President, and was determined to do it again despite a feeling that he ought to mind the store in Washington. I respect him for having the guts to do what he wanted to do, at no discernible cost to the nation except the cost of flying him, courier planes and some 15 economy and energy advisers out to confer with him.

The hard measure of President Ford's leadership and substantive accomplishments in 1974 is the response to his economic address to Congress on October 8. That's the one in which he said he proposed 31 concrete steps to halt inflation—"our number one enemy"—and lick the energy crisis brought on mainly by the foreign oil producers' increases in oil costs and temporary oil embargo. Leaving aside whether there really were 31 concrete proposals (they're hard to find in that number), the interesting fact is that at Mr. Ford's own White House there is a tendency to overstate the disaster that the speech proved to be. The White House cliché is that there was no response at all from Congress and none worth mentioning from the public. Well, there was some. Two steel companies, US Steel and Bethlehem, and the Ford Motor Co. reduced previously announced price increases in response to urgings begun in the October 8 speech. Mr. Ford clearly indicated in that speech that energy needs such as the demand for strip-mined coal would come before his concern for the environmental harm of strip-mining, and nobody should have been surprised when he vetoed a bill that would have curbed though by no means prohibited strip mining and related environmental crimes. To general astonishment, and in demonstration that Gerald Ford can surprise his derogators, he also vetoed a bill that would have eventually required the transport of 30 percent of imported petroleum in high-cost US tankers. It had been widely assumed and reported that the President had swapped a promise to sign the outrageous oil-cargo preference bill for support of the trade-reform bill that Richard Nixon originated and Mr. Ford got through Congress in diluted but constructive form.

The controversial part of the trade bill was its conditioned grant of equal trade status and limited credit to the Soviet Union. Mr. Ford and Secretary Henry Kissinger did extremely well, it seemed to me, in getting this bill through the mill despite the obstructions of Senator Henry Jackson, who persisted (with some success but not as much as he claimed) in forcing Kissinger to extract vague concessions from the Soviet government on Jewish emigration. At the close of 1974 Jackson was locked with the President and Kissinger in a fight over the merits and demerits of the Vladivostok agreement to try to agree on further strategic arms limitation. My New Year's wish is that Messrs. Jackson, Ford, Kissinger and numerous critics and supporters of the Vladivostok formula stop speaking of it as a finished agreement. It isn't. When and if it is, in anything near its present form, it will do Mr. Ford a degree of credit that I started off denying him.

John Osborne

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Faith, Fear and the Future of America

by Gerald W. Johnson

That we are on a hot spot this first month of the new year is something nobody denies—nobody with brains enough to be accounted legally competent. That the spot is likely to grow hotter rather than cool off in the next 12 months very few are disposed to deny. But it does not follow that we are justified in ignoring the number—half a dozen at least—of forces that are working for us. They cannot be reduced to equations or statistical tables, and although they are not inestimable, a computer is utterly worthless as a measuring instrument to apply to them. Nevertheless they are not ever to be disregarded by the people who stubbornly cling to the faith

that two and one make three,
that grass is green,
lakes damp and mountains steep,

even though such are commonly dubbed old-fashioned romantics. Their patron saint is that old softie Otto von Bismarck, who admitted that in politics "the imponderables" are often more important than either military power or money.

One of the imponderables is emotion, another is adaptability or perhaps malleability since it is largely passive. Another is a conviction that the historical process tends, on the whole, toward the amelioration of human existence. All may be delusions basically, but at the moment all are operative and no estimate of our situation can approach accuracy without taking them into account.

A notable case in point is David Fromkin's analysis of the relative badness of a bad situation, which he presented in *The New Republic*'s issue of November 2. He cited figures to show that the stock market crash of 1973-74 was six times as bad as the crash of 1929-32, but that the effects of the more recent calamity are hardly one-sixth as calamitous as those of the earlier affair. He points out that the crash of 1929 led to and to some extent caused the Depression of 1932; yet the end of 1974 found the country in much better shape than it was at the end of 1932. In the three years after 1929 the stock market lost a record-breaking $74 billion of paper values, while in 1973 and nine months of 1974 (remember, he was writing in October 1974) the loss of paper values amounted to more than $420 billion. Yet the effect was far less disastrous.

To most contemporary Americans that statement may convey information but arouses no great emotion. However the age-group from 60 up includes a considerable number of people and these, having reached the age of 20 by March 4, 1933, will understand better what Fromkin had in mind. For on that day they experienced the most tremendous emotional lift that Americans had felt since Abraham Lincoln wrote, "I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within such designated states . . . are and henceforward shall be free," which was perhaps a greater lift than any since Tom Paine by the light of a campfire and with a drumhead as his desk, wrote, "These are the times that try men's souls." And what produced the reaction was the same in all three cases—somebody had taken hold.

The lift felt by some Americans still living came not from reading a printed document but from hearing a voice, made audible to millions by the new electronic technology, telling us that the only thing we had to fear was "nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed effort to convert retreat into advance." As every pundit has assured us, it was pure emotion based on no kind of analyzed, quantified and certified data. Yet it produced results as solidly realistic as anything known to logic.

On the morning of March 4, 1933 every bank in the United States had failed to open its doors. In 1974 under a shock six times as heavy as that of 1929, only one big bank has actually gone to the wall in this country. The reason, says David Fromkin, is a series of federal laws governing banking and the stock market drafted—not exclusively, but very largely—by three of Franklin D. Roosevelt's young brain trusters, Benjamin Cohen, Thomas Corcoran and James Landis. This body of legislation has made it difficult to the verge of impossibility for most people to gamble on the stock market with money borrowed from the stockbrokers, who borrowed it from the banks. So while more people lost more money in the recent crash, not as many were completely ruined. A man who loses his own money usually is left with hope that he can make more; but one who is not only cleaned out but left loaded with debts that he can never repay tends to believe that the only way out is through a 20th story window.

Furthermore although unemployment has been steadily creeping up, to date there have been few soup

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kitchens and no Hoovervilles, the shanty towns that the evicted had thrown together on any vacant lot in 1933. The explanation is the body of social security laws written by the same people. They were designed to cushion the shock of high unemployment, and they did. It is true that some of the New Deal construction was crudely done and has had to be refabricated, and some was badly designed and has had to be abandoned. But after 40 years under the first real test the bulk of it is standing up.

The most ardent New Dealer has to admit that its work was not even half done when the specter of the second holocaust began to overshadow the world. Thus nothing but the malignant excrescences of the economic system received real attention; the more deep-seated sarcomas of maldistribution of wealth and gross dysfunctioning of equality of opportunity were disregarded as military necessity absorbed all energies. Then the increase of intellectual and moral fatigue as the war moved to its climax betrayed us into forgetting the discovery of March 4, 1933, and to fall under the spell of "nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance." This was the political malaise we call the Cold War, surely one of the most irrational and costly conflicts in which two great nations have ever engaged.

In sum then, experience of the past 40 years has demonstrated that the politics of faith and the politics of fear are equally effective, but their drives are in opposite directions as far as the greater numbers of the people are concerned. The point, then, for adherents of either aristocracy or democracy to determine, is that at which the politics of either faith or fear begins to produce effects that no rational person desires.

For many years all reactionary and most conservative Americans were persuaded that the New Deal passed that point when it began to tamper with the existing economic system. Nevertheless not one of its important innovations was repealed by the Eisenhower or any subsequent administration, and experience of the past three years has proved that the legislation dealing with finance was an effective bulwark against complete disaster. If the same clear thinking had been applied to maldistribution of wealth, and to supplanting a fraudulent with a real equality of opportunity, by what logic can it be established that it must have failed? On the other hand, if it might have succeeded in '34 or '35, why should it be certainly disastrous to try it in '75 or '76?

The bald fact is that try we must, and our choice is only between trying heartily or timidly. The existing maldistribution of income and fraudulent equality of opportunity are inconsistent with the survival of American democracy. They will go, or the country will. There is no third choice.

The chances are that they will go because the Nixon administration must be awarded the doubtful credit of having brought the country to the emotional boiling point, which guarantees action, not excluding sensible action. Moralists deplore the fact that the wrath that propelled Richard Nixon from the White House was not aroused by the burglary, perjury, forgery, swindling and extortion plotted and sometimes perpetrated there, but by the insolence practiced by the understrappers with the example and encouragement of their chief. Perhaps we ought to abhor heinous crimes far more than a mere slap in the face, but the fact is, we don't. When the tapes at last revealed the utter contempt in which Nixon and his crew held the common people, they touched the one nerve that could overcome the moral inertia generated by a long economic boom. The blast followed.

Moreover the emotional heat generated by Watergate has been maintained by the emotional reaction to inflation. This means action by the new Congress and there is an even chance that it will be as rational as the financial reforms of 40 years ago. No matter if it is only an even chance, it is no augury of Doomsday.

The quality of adaptability, or malleability, claimed above is an asset more questionable. It applies directly to our domestic situation, but has a bearing on our foreign relations as well because all the nations of the Western world face the same problem, in less urgent form perhaps, but differing only in degree, not in kind.

I refer to a side-effect of the population explosion common to all the earth and reinforced by the extreme mobility of mankind. France and Britain in particular, but all the European nations to some extent, are being flooded with displaced persons, some propelled by political tyranny but more by economic pressure, and representing not merely diverse nationalities but also extremely diverse cultures. The problem is adjustment of representatives, in formidable numbers, of diverse cultures living in close contact. It cannot be done in the dominant-dominated, much less in the master-slave pattern that was customary through most of recorded history, but it must be done in some fashion to stave off anarchy.

We Americans have had a longer experience with this problem than any other of the highly developed Western nations. It would be ridiculous to claim that

COMING: Will the world be ruined by petrodollars? — a primer on oil money by Sidney E. Rolfe

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we have been brilliantly successful with it, but we have managed to set off only one great explosion of the land mine and that was more than 100 uears ago. Only in the case of the Indians—well, of the Mormons, too, in respect of the one item of polygamy—have we persisted to this day in maintaining the dominant-dominated relation in law. In practice is another matter. Certainly we have done no worse than the English have in Ireland and it is conceivable that our experience may have in it something of value to other nations seeking to reduce the likelihood of racial and/or religious wars.

So while the outlook is for strenuous times ahead, it is nonsense to assume that we go into the area of trouble completely unequipped. On the contrary by comparison with most of our natural allies we are well equipped and by the same token ought to render a better account of ourselves than most of the others have been able to do.

There is, however, one problem that has been, for the most part, unexamined even by our far-out savants. It is the unexpected and undesired achievement of technology in devaluing youth.

At a time within the memory of living men—especially in farmhouses where a very large proportion of our people still lived—it was nothing extraordinary for children at a very early age to begin to shift from economic liabilities to assets of rapidly increasing value. A farmer with 150 reasonably fertile acres and a pair of strapping sons of 17 and 18 years could live comfortably and put money in the bank; and his wife with as many healthy daughters was unlikely to be broken down before her time by the housework. Nobody believed that a boy of eight suffered any physical or mental damage by going daily to the woodpile and bringing in a basketful of chips for kindling; nor did his twin sister suffer by helping grandma feed the chickens or by sweeping off the leaves that the wind had deposited on the front porch. But the positive effect on the small fry was largely neglected in those pre-Freudian days when most of us would merely have looked blank at mention of the phrase "establishment of identity." Nevertheless delivery of the chips and sweeping the porch definitely identified the twins as contributors to the whole operation of the establishment. Each had a recognized place in the scheme of things, and if either failed to function someone else would have to be assigned to the job. In short they *counted* and he or she who counts is not a nonentity, but a person.

But now that the very concept of handiwork has almost faded away the assertion that "happy is the man" with a houseful of children sounds like bitter satire as applied not merely to the poor but to any below the level of considerable affluence. From the third—often the second—each additional birth is hailed not as a blessed event, but as a calamity, and never doubt that the children know it. Perhaps they cannot express it in words, but they are aware that they are an unwanted burden and consciousness of that fact tends to disqualify them as valuable additions to the social structure, tending, rather, to make them elements of weakness.

This is a condition that as far as our present knowledge goes is irremediable. Moralists are merely gabbling when they talk of the duty of parents to welcome each addition to the family with joy, when they are having a desperate struggle to keep the already existent members decently fed, clothed and housed. Hypocrisy of that kind doesn't fool the children, and when you know that your existence is deplored the value that you put on it yourself is bound to sink and what we call "alienation" ensues. Ascetics point out, correctly, that sexual ascetism is an answer, but ascetism also implies the gradual withering of all of what Woodrow Wilson called "our generous energies" and would end by extinction of the species.

To pose a question to which there is no answer is commonly branded an exercise in futility. It isn't, for it is by repetitive questioning that we are harried into finding or inventing an answer. But it is sobering to realize that redressing the maldistribution of wealth and the inequality of opportunity, appallingly difficult as both problems are, can only clear the way to confrontation with another problem more difficult than either, or, perhaps, both.

Everything hitherto mentioned is primarily a domestic question, but the operative word is "primarily." Successful solution of each of them would contribute materially to solution of the problem in foreign relations that underlies all others. It is the problem of recapturing for the United States the reputation that it enjoyed briefly in 1947 but quickly lost as it succumbed to the politics of fear carried to a crazy extreme. That reputation briefly persuaded the greater part of mankind that the continued existence of this republic was more an advantage than a threat to the rest of the world. Such a reputation constitutes the only genuine national security that is attainable in this world. We had it at the moment when we announced the Marshall Plan. But we threw it away to snatch at the phantom security that seems to be offered by overwhelmingly superior military power. Recapturing it will assuredly call for a combination of wisdom and courage matching and perhaps exceeding any that we have exhibited thus far.

Harding described the near miracle of his nomination for the presidency in terms of poker. "We drew to a pair of deuces and filled," he said, meaning that calling for three cards they were dealt three of a kind, constituting a full house, a very handsome hand.

We are better off. In emotion, experience and faith we hold three 10s—some would say three kings—and a man who lacks the nerve to bet that hand simply ought not to sit in the game.

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A Light Skiff on a Deep Ocean

The Linowitz Report

by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

The Commission on United States-Latin American Relations has recently put out, to general applause, a report entitled "The Americas in a Changing World" ("It would be hard to produce a better blueprint for . . . inter-American relations," *The New York Times*, November 8). The commission was chosen by the board of directors of that useful New York institution, the Center for Inter-American Relations. The commission's chairman, Sol Linowitz, had served admirably as United States ambassador to the Organization of American States. Its other 22 members were all persons of experience and eminence. Indeed one of our most intelligent Latin American experts, William D. Rogers, resigned from the commission in September when he was appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. One can only be grateful for the CIAR's effort to restore Latin America to its proper place in the attention of the United States, government and people alike. One is grateful also for the generally sensible recommendations the commission has now made.

And one understands that any report produced by a commission of 23 has obligatory professional deformations. It is bound to end up as the lowest common denominator of the views of the members, each of whom would no doubt wish to have carried the analysis farther in one or another direction. The rhetorical excess is probably obligatory too. The report thus makes dramatic and insistent claims of a self-preening sort that it has come up with "a new US approach to inter-American relations" and that it is proposing "a fundamental shift in the premises underlying US policies."

All this preliminary trumpet-blowing raises expectations—which is curious in a report that condemns the undue raising of expectations. There is in consequence a certain disappointment when one reaches the actual recommendations. Thus:

Recommendation 15: "The United States should encourage the strengthening of the OAS conciliation and peacekeeping capacities."

Recommendation 19: "The US government should provide increased support for Latin American Area Studies at all levels of the educational system."

Recommendation 32: "The Commission recommends that the United States undertake cooperative research in marine science."

These are hardly novel or even controversial thoughts. To be fair, most of the specific proposals made in the report are less bland than this, and most of them are sound. Some of them, like the normalization of relations with Cuba, may even be considered bold, in some circles at least. Still the recommendations seem curiously random. Certainly they hardly add up to the "fundamental shift" the report pretends to offer. And this is where the report is so spectacular a failure. It does not stand back and take a hard look at, or offer any serious analysis of, the really difficult questions of US relations with Latin America.

The report thus invokes in a number of places, and assumes throughout, the idea of the "commonality of interest" between the United States and Latin America. Then at one point it admits that the United States can no longer count on "an easy and permanent mutuality of interest." Obviously there is a thorny question here, one deserving more sustained consideration. Is the US interest in Latin America in the end geographical, historical and sentimental? Or is Latin America of vital political, strategic and economic importance to the United States? As for the Latin American states, may it not be to their interest to define themselves, to discover their national and regional identity, against the United States rather than with it?

Obviously such questions are unanswerable on the level of generality deployed in the report. Obviously also the answer depends on the kind of Latin America Latin Americans want. And it depends too on the kind United Statesians want. (One is forced into this unpleasant neologism in order to escape the complacency by which we arrogate to ourselves a word that properly covers everyone from the Eskimos to the Tierra del Fuegans.) Some of us, for example, want authoritarian governments in Latin America that will protect US private investment. Others of us want democratic governments that will claim economic independence and use their resources for the people. But the report is oblivious to such issues.

Indeed, the whole question of democracy *vs.* authoritarianism in Latin America hardly figures in the "overall US approach" proposed in the report. There

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are some splendid recommendations regarding respect for human rights. But, if the word *democracy* was mentioned in the report, I missed it. So far as the report is concerned, the commission would appear to be entirely happy with dictatorial regimes in Brazil and Chile if only they would stop torturing political opponents. The omission could hardly have been accidental; and the report might surely have explained why the 23 notables decided to suppress democracy as a consideration in US policy. All this seems an unfortunate retreat from the approach of the early 1960s.

I might add parenthetically that one would not recognize the Alliance for Progress from the description given in the report—as a Cold War instrumentality dominated by the "overriding goal" of "military security." This may have been the way the alliance turned out after 1963, but it was not the original conception nor the original execution. The true Alliance for Progress came to an end with the death of President Kennedy. Another program by the same name struggled on after the political and social components of the original alliance—*i.e.*, its heart—had been removed.

The premise of the alliance as originally conceived was that democracy ought to be the common objective of the American states. The Declaration of Punta del Este in 1961 began: "This Alliance is established on the basic principle that free men working through the institutions of representative democracy can best satisfy man's aspirations." The first goal to which the signatory nations pledged themselves was: "To improve and strengthen democratic institutions through application of the principle of self-determination by the people." The report implicitly rejects this objective.

Members of the commission tell me that they wanted to eschew paternal exhortations to the Latin Americans. So do we all. The report, they say, is addressed exclusively to United States policy. So be it. A preference for democracy over authoritarianism goes to the essence of United States policy. Such a preference, for example, would enjoin correct relations with all constitutional regimes and warm relations with democratic regimes. The report is obscure on the question of diplomatic recognition; but I take its opaque statement that the United States should not withhold recognition "on the basis of ideological affinities" to mean that, if a democratic government is overthrown by force, we should not delay in recognizing the new crowd, whatever its intentions. As for economic assistance, far from relating this to respect for democratic institutions, the report, in one of its few concrete references to particular countries, calls for increased aid to Paraguay, the most venerable dictatorship in Latin America.

All this implies a repudiation of the Declaration of Punta del Este. And it further muddles the question of mutuality of interest. For this question can only be understood in relation to the character of the regime. There cannot be much mutuality of interest between a democratic United States and an authoritarian Latin America or between a democratic Latin America and a reactionary United States. The only prospect for authentic commonality of interest is between a democratic United States and a democratic Latin America.

The 23 notables do not see it this way. And they appear as indifferent to economic as to political democracy. The report thus displays no serious United States interest in the Punta del Este reform issues—reforms in income distribution, in land ownership, in taxation, in the allocation of resources and so on. I have, heaven knows, no illusions about the ability of the United States to produce reform in other nations. But unless we make it clear that we are friendly rather than hostile to governments that propose to undertake such reforms, the assumption of democratic-minded Latin Americans will be that the US continues to stand with their local oligarchies and our private investments against internal change and with the uncontrolled market against economic planning.

One wishes that the report had gone much more deeply into the question that probably poisons United States relations more than any other: US private investments. Its practical recommendations in this area are useful and to the point. It proposes the repeal of the infamous Hickenlooper Amendment, which provides for the automatic cutoff of bilateral economic aid in cases where US-owned firms are expropriated without agreement on compensation, and the revocation of Nixon's awful statement of January 19, 1972, extending the cutoff policy into multilateral agencies, like the Inter-American Bank, when the United States has controlling power. To its credit the report emphatically opposes this demeaning effort to convert the United States government into a collection agency for private corporations.

But we need much more than this. One had hoped for an informed discussion of the future of United States private investment in a part of the world where nations aspire to control their own economic destiny. Ironically the North American business community may be growing more sympathetic to this aspiration than it has been in the past. The old Chamber of Commerce commitment to the sanctity of foreign private investment is not likely to survive the prospect of massive OPEC investment in the United States. Exactly the sort of people who used to cry out with indignation when a Latin American country imposed restrictions on US investment are now themselves calling for restrictions on Arab investment—no more than 10 percent voting power for Arabs in US corporations, for example, or total exclusion from strategic industries. In time we may find ourselves expropriating Arab-owned property. Let us hope that Kuwait has no Hickenlooper Amendment.

As our business leaders reflect on this problem,

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they will be in a better position to understand how Latin America feels about US private investment. My own suspicion is that we will never have stable and successful relationships south of the border so long as any important share of United States business hopes to make itself rich in Latin America. If that suspicion is wrong, I wish the report had refuted it. I wish too, the report had gone into the considerations raised by Albert Hirschman in his essay on "How to Divest in Latin America, and Why"—his argument, for example, that, at a certain stage of development, private foreign investment may become a "retarding influence," stunting the local entrepreneurial, managerial, technological and capital formation possibilities. But here as elsewhere, the report is sadly devoid of analysis.

As one reads this shallow document, one can only sorrow over the wasted opportunity. Members of the commission explain its triviality by saying that their report was conceived as a message to the present administration and therefore had to accommodate itself to the mind and vision of those who make our present policy. This seems an unnecessary insult to Secretary Kissinger and Assistant Secretary Rogers. In any case the commission would surely have done better to raise its sights and seize the opportunity to educate a future administration, the press and the public. Instead we have a document that evades most of the tough questions, does little to advance our understanding of the deeper policy issues and represents a sorry retrogression from an earlier ideal of a hemisphere united by devotion to democratic institutions.

Access Rights to Children's Minds

Texts for Our Times

by John Mathews

Charleston, W. Va.

The women in their haircurlers and kerchiefs from the coal mining towns and creek hollows of the Kanawha River valley south of the city wait for the Rev. James Lewis to come out of the meeting hall. As this city minister, an Episcopalian, works his way through the crowd of "creeker" women who have raged for months against the "filthy" textbooks, one woman shouts at him: "Hi, son-of-a-bitch. How are you? You approve of that don't you? Those words are in the books."

Lewis had appeared last month at a hearing sponsored by a worried National Education Association and spoken in favor of the "multicultural, multiethnic" textbooks that have kept the Kanawha County school system in an uproar for months. Then the fundamentalist ministers, who have led the holy war against the texts, had their turn before a stacked audience of their adherents. "You think we're only Bible-loving, fundamentalist, illiterate hillbillies," said the Rev. Ezra Graley, pastor of the Summit Ridge Church of God, "we have vowed before God and man to kick out those filthy books that's in our schools."

His partner, the Rev. Marvin Horan, pastor of Leewood Baptist Church in Cabin Creek, told of fourth and fifth grade children who can't spell, of seventh graders who can't multiply and eighth grade students who can barely read. He railed against the school board, which temporarily took the books out of the classrooms but has now put them back. "We are very skeptical of people of authority," he said. "We done been put through the wringers of deceit by the courts and the authorities."

At first the Charleston episode seemed no more than some fundamentalist mountainfolk ranting against progressive textbooks, condemning plays like Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* for using "goddamn" 39 times, or selections from black authors like Eldridge Cleaver, and occasionally spraying school buses with shotgun fire or bombing school buildings. But the holy war against the textbooks, spurred by the media attention given the Kanawha protest, has encouraged local groups and individuals elsewhere who have been waging their own crusades for years.

In Prince Georges County, Maryland, a middle income white collar to lower income blue collar suburb of Washington, a conservative school board bans a film of the Shirley Jackson short story, "The Lottery,"

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as destructive of family values. In Wisconsin school boards and libraries pull from the classroom and library shelves *The Godfather, The Exorcist, The Last Whole Earth Catalog, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee,* and that standby of book banners for the last 23 years, *The Catcher in the Rye.* In Vermont, a small school district near Bennington rejects a gift subscription to the high school of the magazine *Ms.*

The book battles are only the vanguard of a more comprehensive assault on the public schools. They are bringing together the anti-sex education and anti-sensitivity training people; the basic educationists who want phonics in reading instruction, computation only in math, and old-style grammar in English courses; the put-prayer-back-in-the-schools people; the hardline disciplinarians; the anti-busers.

It is dangerously simplistic to write off this movement as a know-nothing, anti-intellectual, intolerant minority abetted by the John Birch Society and other such fanatical groups. In the embattled West Virginia county, the Kanawha Coalition for Quality Education —citizens who are fighting a lonely war in defense of diversity—takes a deeper view of the conflict. One of their statements notes that "Watergate, a changing set of values, Vietnam, inflation, and a host of other confusing trends in the social order have brought about a situation in which people are frustrated, confused, angry and fearful. When such a condition exists, there is a desire on the part of human beings to seek simple solutions to complicated problems, react to change with hostility, and meet authority and existing structures and systems with cynicism and lack of trust. Much of what we have experienced here can be seen as a reactionary spirit lashing out against a society and system which is confusing, seemingly out of control, and disappointingly unable to live up to expectations. The textbooks have been a convenient scapegoat for such anomie."

To miner families in Kanawha County or to educational and religious conservatives in Prince Georges County and elsewhere, the public schools are out of control, unresponsive to a minority, purveyors of a "secular humanist philosophy," a heretical liberalism that is offensive to their beliefs. In a sense their frustrations have a kinship with the community control advocates of the late 1960s in New York and elsewhere who wanted to rescue their schools and their curriculum from the imposed values of the white majority. In the recent past the liberals were quick to ban old standards like *Little Black Sambo* as offensive to blacks, and *Dick and Jane* readers for being grossly sexist.

When the extremism of the book banners in Kanawha County is laid aside, some real issues of significance to any democratically run public school system remain.

Who governs the curriculum? Public school teachers have never had an absolute right to decide what books and materials are used in the classroom. In virtually all school systems, final approval of book lists is left to the school board, and in over 20 states these books are themselves limited by a state-approved list.

Should parents help choose textbooks? In Kanawha County the disputed textbooks were recommended to the school board by screening committees made up

"Hurry children—time for your ancient Greek studies!"

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entirely of teachers, bypassing a parent advisory committee used in the past. Now the school board has gone in the opposite direction, giving screening committees dominated three to one by parents initial veto power over new textbooks.

Should individual parents have the right to object to exposing their children to particular texts or other teaching materials that offend their religious or moral scruples? Some school systems grant parents this veto power; others don't, believing that to do so opens the door wide to unlimited censorship.

In Kanawha County 325 book titles—about 70,000 books costing $419,000, all in the language arts field—have been the source of the controversy. The Business and Professional People's Alliance for Better Textbooks took a full page advertisement in the *Charleston Gazette* recently that cited chapter and verse of what it regards as offensive passages in textbooks. From *Themes in Science Fiction,* a Webster/McGraw Hill series, the advertisement quoted: "Page 57—'For Christ's sake!'; Page 319—'Von Kleigstadt was in one hell of a state'; Page 320—'Dammit, Pat! Please marry me!'" Other series are cited for words including: "ass . . . tits . . . son of a bitch . . . crapping 'round . . . pimp . . . nigger." Some selections were said to be cruel or brutal, depressing, subversive of parental and governmental authority, or too involved with issues like race, drugs and crime.

An anti-book faction of a citizens committee that reviewed the disputed texts after their initial adoption in Kanawha County put together a 500-page critique that began: "It has been said that this adoption [of the texts] is relevant, timely and offers to the student a view of our nation and world 'as it really is.' We would agree that this statement is partially true, however, we feel that the view that is offered is distorted and surrealistic. Even if it was totally true we ask that you consider this: do not merely show America 'as it is,' but give our children hope and promise that with God's grace and wisdom they may one day see our nation and world 'as it should be.'"

One of the objectionable textbook series, *Communicating,* published by D. C. Heath Co. for first through sixth grade students, raises none of the issues of obscenity and profanity the book banners usually dwell on. The colorful, well illustrated books include *Jack and the Beanstalk, The Three Little Pigs, The Gingerbread Man,* Aesop's fables or Hans Christian Andersen tales. But *Communicating* is definitely "multicultural and multiethnic," sprinkled liberally with the faces and writings of blacks, Indians and other minorities. The series is based on an "oral language" approach, encouraging children to express themselves freely and even incorrectly. Stories do not hesitate to use colloquial, ungrammatical or even street language, although teachers are urged to point out when such language is inappropriate. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are not taught in isolation, but lessons stem directly from the reading selections. Most importantly the series does not shy away from what educators call the "affective" side of education. Particularly in the teacher's guide—which children never see and teachers may ignore—discussion questions encourage children to deal with the moral and ethical issues raised in the stories, to express their feelings, emotions and opinions, and to confront issues of principle.

Read from this perspective it quickly becomes evident that a high proportion of children's literature, ranging from the classic to the contemporary, inevitably deals with moral and ethical questions. For instance, how could a teacher ignore the moral implications of *Jack and the Beanstalk,* which ends with Jack killing the giant and profiting, along with his mother, from the hen that lays golden eggs and other magical properties he has stolen?

The teacher's guide for *Communicating* suggests as a discussion question: "Do you think Jack is wrong to take the giant's bag of gold, then hen and harp? Does he have a right to take these? Why or why not?" The Kanawha textbook critics object to this "open-ended question," saying discussion of Jack's motives amounts to "situation ethics which should be condemned."

Fifth and sixth grade books in the series *Communicating* begin to deal with such questions. A black dialect poem tells of the plight of a poor tenant farmer and a Gwendolyn Brooks poem speaks of the contrast between rich and the sometimes envious poor of Chicago. The Kanawha critics say that "asking for a commentary on the social plight of blacks assumes injustice at the hands of whites and can only serve to reinforce any feelings of racism the children may have."

In Kanawha County the book banners are winning, for although the books officially are back in the schools, they are not being used. The protesters' school boycott has generally failed, but a vacillating school board has agreed to a new screening heavily stacked in favor of local community representatives and a set of criteria for book selection that may exclude all but the most bland and non-controversial materials. Textbooks, these criteria say, "must not contain offensive language," and "must not infringe into the privacy of students' homes by asking personal questions about inner feelings . . . or encourage them to criticize their parents by direct questions, statement or inference." As the county heads toward adoption of social studies texts, committees must keep in mind the dictum that "textbooks shall encourage loyalty to the United States and the several states and emphasize the responsibilities of citizenship and the obligation to redress grievances through legal processes. They must not encourage sedition or revolution against our government or teach or imply that an alien form of government is superior."

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Stanley Kauffmann on theater

More Bundles from Britain

Sherlock Holmes (Broadhurst). A Royal Shakespeare Company production, directed by Frank Dunlop. (He did the *Scapino* now being played here by the Young Vic.) The script is Anglo-American, several of Conan Doyle's stories adapted by the American actor William Gillette for his own use.

My memories of Gillette, whom I never saw, are of pictures in the Sunday rotogravure section: the retired star riding the miniature railway on his Connecticut estate, built largely with the profits from *Sherlock Holmes*. Possibly there was some connection between his private passion for gadgetry and the impedimenta of this play. The press release for the RSC production reads like pre-film touring-company days: "*Sherlock Holmes* has 5 sets, 40 tons of scenery and costumes, London fog, trap doors, hidden elevators, and secret passages." All true.

But the adaptation, which Gillette played very often from 1899 to a revival in 1929, is dated in the wrong way. It has all the dramaturgic clichés of its period—thick exposition, star entrances, transparent build-ups to pay-offs—with insufficient period thrill. It creaks, and it seems to end two or three times. It ends in fact with the obscenity of Holmes kissing a girl. But this is Conan Doyle's fault. When Gillette asked for permission to adapt the stories and "marry" Holmes, Conan Doyle replied—says Pierre Nordon, his biographer—"with lazy indifference that Gillette could do just as he liked with Holmes, marry him or finish him off for good and all."

On the credit side of the show is Holmes himself, still the civilized man's Superman. John Wood is superb, marvelously resourceful in vocal colors, romantically philosophical in bearing, incising his performance like a 19th-century engraving in motion. Philip Locke's Professor Moriarty, modeled in appearance (I guess) on Fritz Lang's master criminal Dr. Mabuse, is almost equally good.

But I hope that Wood and Locke won't [illegible] this show too long. It was originally planned as a light bit in the RSC repertory. It's trifling with their talents to do a long run of this deliberately hollow, display acting.

London Assurance (Palace). Another RSC production. Apparently the RSC moves its most successful productions out of rep into the West End and elsewhere to spin money for the mother company. Whether this hurts the artistic ensemble one can't say from here, but it certainly sounds risky. I saw *London Assurance* (half of it) two years ago in its West End run. Since then members of the cast have done other things and have now reassembled for the US.

I despise this show (all of it now). Ronald Eyre, who adapted and directed, seemingly decided that he, his company and his audience are very much superior to this 1841 play and staged it just to prove the point. Not a cranny that could be stuffed with gags, not a line that could be kidded, not a character that could be cartooned is left untouched. They do it all moderately well, but what fundamentally sickening work.

I'm not calling for protest marches against the violation of minor Victoriana. But Dion Boucicault, the Irishman who wrote this successful play at 20 and then had a long career as actor and director, playwright and adapter (he did Jefferson's version of *Rip Van Winkle*), was not a fool. He wrote this play as an amiable satire on the follies of his day. A middle-aged aristocrat is besotted with the vogue of estheticism and also with a plan to marry a young girl for her property. He loses her, after much pother, to his son, who is one more version of the reformed wastrel we know from *Love for Love* and *The School for Scandal*. Along the way father, son, idle friend and sharp lawyer get a nice roasting in dialogue that is always curlicued and occasionally elegant. It's hardly a work of much consequence but neither is it utter hokum.

In a well known lecture on the art of acting that Boucicault gave to London professionals in 1882, a still-valuable talk, he mentions that the actor who first played the foolish aristocrat came to him for advice and Boucicault gave him the names of "two old fogies" on whom he had based the role so that the actor could study them. Donald Sinden, the gifted man who plays the role now, has studied only gags. He mugs at the audience, dislocates his false teeth when he trills the French "r," and so on. Of course there are laughs; there would also be laughs if he split his trousers when he bowed. Eyre and Sinden and many of the others are satirizing the satire, and it's cheap. It's as if an orchestra were to revive a Raff symphony and sob in the violin passages. Why bother with it at all?

A few of the actors survive this smart-assing, possibly because Eyre couldn't think of any way for them to foul their particular nests. For instance Sydney Bromley, as the elderly husband of a hyperactive horsewoman, plays straight and sweet. But the air of Eyre pervades, and really suffocates at the very end—which I had been lucky enough to miss in London by leaving at intermission. All problems have been solved, all principals are present, and the aristocrat, chastened and enlightened, delivers the closing speech about the qualities of the true English gentleman. The sentiments are certainly somewhat remote from us, but if the play had been done straight, the speech would carry its own self-satire, because of changed attitudes, and might have some lace-and-lavender charm. Instead as Sinden sings away, overdoing it ostentatiously, the other characters yawn and the lights dim on them, and the play ends with Sinden yattering in a spotlight with everyone else asleep. It doesn't even fit the kind of gagging Eyre has used up to now, but it makes the audience, fresh from the heights of Neil Simon,

(continued on page 33)

Films Worth Seeing

Amarcord. Still top of the list, and not just alphabetically. Fellini's lovely lyric of adolescent memories, some of them not so lovely.

Lenny. A soggy script about the sizzling comic, but Bob Fosse directs his cast and camera well.

Murder on the Orient Express. Whatever you could possibly want from a film with such a title is supplied by a splendid all-star cast.

Scenes from a Marriage. Bergman jammed his six-part Swedish TV series into three hours but most of what's there, including Liv Ullmann, is fine.

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Demon in the Counterculture

Helter Skelter
by Vincent Bugliosi and Curt Gentry

(Norton; $10)

Helter Skelter is an indifferently written social document of rare importance. It tells how the mass murderer Charles Manson and his followers were trapped, tried and sentenced, in fact, everything medicine and law will probably ever know about their crimes and lives. The authors are superb when dealing with fact and sound, when unraveling motive. They even make an honest try at getting to the final *why* of Manson, though they fail, and freely confess it. Bugliosi, prosecutor of the Tate-LaBianca murders, writes:

> [*Many*] *factors contributed to Manson's control over others . . .* [*but*] *I tend to think that there is something more . . . Whatever it is, I believe Manson has full knowledge of the formula he used. And it worries me that we do not.*

It worries me too. Charles Manson was probably the weirdest mass murderer in the history of the United States. It would be nice to think him a social aberration so bizarre as to be the product of nothing but chemical confusion, never to be repeated again. But too much in his story seems rooted in a culture he twisted to his own uses. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the counterculture of the 1960s—which offered us beautiful music, new ways to live our lives, and the will to end the war—gave birth as well to Charlie Manson.

That understanding is explicit in the work of Bugliosi only to the extent that he had the wisdom to seek motives far outside the usual range of police thinking. So the names of the Beatles and the Beach Boys, of prominent film-and-fashion makers of the time, crop up again and again in his documentation. "If I'm looking for a motive, I'd look for something which doesn't fit your habitual standard . . . something much more far out," Roman Polanski advised one detective. The detective didn't take that advice—beyond briefly making Polanski himself a suspect—but the prosecutor did. He even went to the length of reading newspaper astrology columns dated around the time of the murders to see whether Manson might be getting his tips from the stars. A small thing, and indeed a wrong direction. It meant that the law was beginning to think like its quarry.

But Bugliosi's imagination was still too far removed from the Manichean split in Manson's world to make the connections that would prove evident to other observers.

The summer of the killings was the summer of 1969. One of its central events, the Woodstock music festival, capped the happiest explorations of the counterculture and another, the moon shot, summed up the best powers of the technology that opposed it. It was hell summer. If some of us had gone to the moon and others to Woodstock to OD on music in the mud, still others persisted a world away with cluster bombs and napalm. A political dynasty went off a bridge at Chappaquiddick, not much minded in the general wake for a politics that had died in Chicago the summer before. Black people had burned their own cities that year—would they do ours this complicated season? Soon a black man would die at a rock concert as Mick Jagger sang "Sympathy for the Devil," pausing at the time of the murder—though still unaware of it—to demand "Why is there always trouble when we sing this song?" And later actions, half-understood, would flare away from the central events of the summer of '69: two princes and a queen of rock-and-roll to die within a year of each other; students to be shot down by the national guard within the walls of their state universities; another to be blown to bits by his radical brothers, and then some of those brothers and sisters to blow themselves to bits, bomb-building in a basement while in Asia the bombing war went on.

Who will swear there is no smallest causal nexus between these events and the darkest flower of those August days when a band of killer androids, hand-tuned by Charles Milles Manson, crept into two houses and slaughtered on all sides in the name of the Beatles, the Bible and the little godling who called himself Man's Son?

No: the finest taste for nostalgia will not redeem some days of the summer of '69.

It was a time that found many of the best minds among us steeped in notions of black magic. Even as two years before, radical pragmatism had been sauced in Yippie liturgy in hopes of razing the Pentagon with a grim and joyful song, now Norman Mailer, a mover of that noble march, would reflect on mindless murder without surprise as the work of a young man "steeped by report in no modest depths of witchcraft." And Marshall Berman, seeking to relate the experience of the '60s to the legend of Faust (in a fine essay to be found in *New American Review #19*) remembered that Pentagon march in diabolical terms, reflecting on the psychic links between the devil and his desert prophet, Charles Manson. "Remember," one of his professors chided him when he was on his way to Washington, "Faust gets hold of those powers because he's really serious about the devil. Are you?" Soon we all would have to be.

A sense of the demonic is missing from this book; Ed Saunders' *The Family* may be consulted to supply it. But everything else is in these pages: the interminable police work (much of it poor) and elaborate theory-building, the careful legal mechanics rewarded by the dramatic trials, the links of rock-and-roll to revolution (and *Revelations*), an endless collection of telling small details.

The police work can be dismissed with the observation that it's a miracle the Mansonoids were ever brought to trial. According to Bugliosi the detectives working on the Tate murders were old-style, up-from-the-ranks types who wouldn't give the sleek, schooled LaBianca operatives the time of day, so it was some little while before the cases, despite their similarities, were connected.

For some time officers took no interest in the fact that a variation on the word "pig" was scrawled at the scene of the different murders. Deputy coroners often failed to do blood subtypes or measure wound dimensions. A form letter trying to trace the murder gun went to every police department in the country—except the most concerned substation of the L.A.P.D. (The weapon was finally found by chance by a child, then lost for a time in the evidence files.) A TV news crew located some incrimi-

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nating clothing that police hadn't bothered to look for. And these screw-ups hardly exhaust the list.

Bugliosi cites a number of lucky breaks and is not bashful about his own high competence. No doubt others involved in the case will take angry issue with many of his assertions. But this concerns us less than the horrors uncovered once Manson and the family were successfully brought to trial.

The prosecutor was confident he could get convictions of the actual killers on evidence alone, but to convict Manson, he had to prove overwhelmingly Manson's utter domination over the family, which suggested in turn that he would have to establish motive. It would be a large job, and would take him into areas where the law need not usually go (there is no legal requirement for a prosecutor to prove motive; he need only demonstrate an act has been committed).

To accomplish this he presented the jury with examples of Manson's incredible power over his people, documenting again and again techniques of exploitation by sex, by drugs, by isolation, by fear and even by music (the counterculture's greatest gift, and his bond to kids many years his junior), but most of all by the repeated elaboration of his philosophy to an eager audience whose values it endorsed and whose sense of alienation and rejection it applauded.

Manson had a theory of opposites, involving a "love" that called for killing (Susan Atkins would say she had to love Sharon Tate a lot to kill her with the relish she felt) and for desecration of the dead (the Tate killers had hoped to pluck the eyeballs from their victims but regretted they hadn't the time). A drive to realize one's self, so long as that self remained enslaved to Manson. A tacit understanding that Manson was Jesus Christ. A hope to be part of the saved on that great day when Charlie would trigger helter-skelter and the survivors returned to rule the world. . . .

Helter-skelter lies at the core of Manson's thinking. At his trial he defined it as "confusion, literally," and suggested it was "only what lives inside each and every one of you." Susan Atkins gave a fuller account of the thinking of her lord and master. ". . . Helter skelter was to be the last war on the face of the earth. It would be all the wars that have ever been fought, built one on top of the other . . . You can't conceive of what it would have been like to see every man judge himself and then take it out on every other man all over the face of the earth." Helter-skelter was Charles Man-

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son's design for Armageddon: by committing crimes like the Tate-LaBianca murders and leaving clues to throw the blame on black power groups, Manson hoped to force a police crackdown on the blacks who would retaliate with war against the whites. The blacks would win. Then Manson and his band would emerge from their magical cave under Death Valley and "lead" (*i.e.*, reenslave) the victors.

It is harder now than it would have been in the '60s to imagine children dumb or drugged enough to be entranced by such a story. But Manson had an old con's skill (he had spent most of his life in prison—had even begged to be kept inside before being released for his final killing spree) at picking the members of his band: the girls were young, homeless, fanciful, at war with their parents—the boys were kept in line by being given the girls. In the moonlit desert, in the ready-made romance of the decaying Spahn Movie Ranch, they would sit adoringly around Charlie and hear him make promises of a future that would give them the power they'd never had, heal wounds that burned fresh daily. There were drugs, sex in constant splashes every which way, and all the other sticks and carrots that kept the kids in line. But there was something else in Manson that could turn them from borderline psychotics into psychopathic killers of unparalleled cruelty. Bugliosi admits it, but he cannot quite say what it is.

Most likely no one will ever be able to. Unlike Bugliosi I doubt Manson himself is in possession of his "formula." The element of the demonic, introduced here to supply the book's only missing note, is not something any pragmatic intelligence feels comfortable with, but one glance at the famous *Life* cover photo of Manson is almost enough to make disbelievers switch sides. (It's included in the exhaustive photo section of this book.) I don't think there's any possible doubt that Manson was a demon—not possessed by one, *was* one. His hellish history makes any appeal to a supernatural principle superfluous; but having both motive and motive force behind it, we are still shy of understanding. To come closer to that we must close in on the ideational undertow of helter-skelter, the art where Manson's twisted art originates.

It is in music. Manson was convinced that the Beatles were sending him coded messages in support of helter-skelter, particularly in the double "white album" released in 1968; he took the term from one of its songs. As family members testified at the trial, he had worked out with scholarly precision correlations between his murderous doctrine and virtually every line of every lyric; more than that he had searched beyond his origins in the Beatles to *their* origins in the *Book of Revelations*, where in the ninth chapter he found the "four angels" with "faces as the faces of men" but "hair as the hair of women"; even mention of their electric guitars ("breastplates of fire") and much else besides.

There was word of a fifth angel, and the family knew who that had to be. One translation of *Revelations* calls him Exterminans.

Revelations 9. Is it chance that the Beatles song Manson liked best is called "Revolution 9"? Or that the Bible chapter ends, "Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries . . ."? And the song ends on the grunting of pigs, and machine-gun fire?

These connections bring us nearer Manson's place on the edges of the counterculture, but they entail risks. A man dies while listening to a hymn to Satan and its author must wonder thereafter if his verse unsheathed the knife; others are sent forth to murder in service of a sick vision founded in the saving vision of four poets. Is an artist responsible for murders committed in his name? A subculture responsible for murderous philosophies conceived under its influence? The Manson murders invite the question.

There are other roots, of course. Comparisons between Manson and Hitler are by no means fatuous; this book offers many, in detail. It's even possible to relate the family to the SS, in that both were unified by blood lust and blood guilt. In more usual terms of social psychology, Manson's history of repeated childhood neglect, abandonment, institutionalization, petty crime and reimprisonment add up to a young man who's likely to have some trouble with daily life.

Manson may deny a "strange power," but he embodied and engineered a very strange scene. The notion that Manson reflected the dark secret side of the effort of some of us to reorganize our private and political lives in light of a new vision derived in unequal measure from rock, dope and the renunciation of secular society—comes closer than any other to explaining him. It was Manson's art to seize on what was totalitarian in the counterculture (notably its doctrinaire certainty that the only true wisdom is the received wisdom of a guru) and polish it into a deadly gift for his elected. So, to an extent, one of the most hopeful movements in American life in this century created one of our darkest social chapters.

The Weatherpeople, Berman notes, ". . . cheered and celebrated the Satanic horrors of the Manson murders as an exemplary political act. The victims were simply 'pigs,' and having been thus written off, they could be righteously rubbed out: their murder was a triumph of the revolutionary will." *Helter Skelter* cites additional ugly evidence: a huge volume of love letters to Manson in prison from young girls wanting to join the family; an underground newspaper that proclaimed him "Man of the Year"; a proliferation of FREE MANSON buttons.

Now five years are gone, the counterculture with them. Manson is jailed, and he won't be out for four years or forever. The family is jailed or scattered. It does not seem to have left heirs, though it has most certainly left a heritage. Our subsequent mass murders have been old-style, ugly enough, but without the wide significant ripples of the Tate-LaBianca case. So this book may have arrived too late to interest the audience

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it deserves. But its great length and flat language notwithstanding, it should be read. Manson's words after his conviction give reason enough why we all should know all of his story:

"Mr. and Mrs. America—you are wrong. I am not the King of the Jews nor am I a hippie cult leader. I am what you have made of me and the mad dog devil killer fiend leper is a reflection of your society. . . . Whatever the outcome of this madness that you call a fair trial or Christian justice, you can know this: In my mind's eye my thoughts light fires in your cities."

Burning still.

William Crawford Woods

WILLIAM CRAWFORD WOODS *is a free-lance journalist who lives in Washington, DC.*

Three Poets

Thank You, Fog
by W. H. Auden
(Random House; $6)

Why I Live in the Forest
by James Nolan
(Wesleyan Univ. Press; $6, $3.45 paper)

The Shade-Seller
by Josephine Jacobsen
(Doubleday; $5.95)

The best thing about these last poems of Auden's is that he seems to have enjoyed writing them. After a lifetime of giving us marvelous poetry, he apparently reached an accommodation with his place in the world:

I can't imagine anything
that I would less like to be
than a disincarnate Spirit,
unable to chew or sip
or make contact with surfaces
or breathe the scents of summer
or comprehend speech and music
or gaze at what lies beyond.
No, God has placed me exactly
where I'd have chosen to be:
the sub-lunar world is such fun,
where Man is male or female
and give Proper Names to all things.

These are mostly not very good poems, tending toward talkiness, full of wise sayings and little preachments:

Consciousness should be a parlour
where words are well-groomed
and reticent.

The tone is generally arch, helped by a liberal dose of esoteric vocabulary: festination, volants, sapid, meinie, sessile, squitters, squamous, thestered, and the like; bring your dictionary. But of course, this being Auden, there is still much to enjoy in wisdom and wit, particularly in "The Entertainment of the Senses," written with Chester Kallman, and some of the haiku-like verses.

These are poems of thanks: thanks for his parents, his country, his health, his friends. Here is the third stanza of "Lullaby":

Let your last thinks all be thanks:
praise your parents who gave you
a Super-Ego of strength
that saves you so much bother,
digit friends and dear them all,
then pay fair attribution
to your age, to having been
born when you were. In boyhood
you were permitted to meet
beautiful old contraptions,
soon to be banished from earth,
saddle-tank loks, beam-engines
and over-shot waterwheels.
Yes, love, you have been lucky:
Sing, Big Baby, sing lullay.

Behind these lines one can hear the echo of the younger Auden, reading the heart-rending lines from his earlier poem of the same name:

Lay your sleeping head, my love,
human on my faithless arm . . .

And we are thankful for these.

A poet to watch is James Nolan, whose first book, *Why I Live in the Forest*, has just been published in the Wesleyan series. While the poems are uneven (*e.g.*, too many Brautigan-like "throw-aways"), they show a tough sensibility combined with lyrical and visual gifts, and a mystical Baudelairean *persona*. The "I" of these poems is magician, outcast, the man in the white tuxedo, the night cook:

All night I sit up in the kitchen
near the stove with a black mushroom
hat and my steel-grey fish-eye cat
mixing a batch of salamander soup
in a teapot: I am the night cook.
I stir and bake while you sleep. . . .

I feed the other side of your eyes
facing the faces inside of your head.

The main subject of Nolan's poetry is the spaced-out burned-out generation (and its relation to the older hemmed-in generation, here represented by parents and sister): people living on the edge, or falling over it into madness, drugs, drink or despair. Energy, humor and compassion save the poems from becoming shrill or maudlin, along with a sharp eye turned inward. The end of "Anima Drag":

If I were a woman
I would sit spaced in all-night
places in a wide straw hat
waiting to meet a man like me
the kind of man that I could be

if I were loved by a woman like me.

Why I Live in the Forest is often exotic and surreal, shot through with the jazz and blues of New Orleans, but in the midst of its wildness, and its sympathy for wildness, there lies a basic common sense that anchors Nolan's poetry to the world, and makes me think he will go on and keep growing:

and you ask me what to do?
Don't show your dreams
to the streetlight

love
don't drive your car
to the moon.

There is a Keatsian density to Josephine Jacobsen's new poems in *The Shade-Seller* (42 of them, plus a good selection from her four earlier books: *The Animal Inside*, 1966; *The Human Climate*, 1953; *For the Unlost*, 1946; *Let Each Man Remember*, 1940). Not only does she "load every rift . . . with ore," as Keats (quoting Spenser) advised Shelley to do, but also she has the knack of getting fully "into" the subjects/objects of her poems. "If a Sparrow come before my Window I take part in its existence and pick about the Gravel," Keats wrote to his friend Bailey; and Jacobsen too seems to take part in the very existence of the parrots, snakes, wolves, sparrows, anemones that she writes about, as in this poem about a wild duck who

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drowned when a tame duck attempted to mate with it (first and last stanzas):

The wild is a way of breathing; a
kind of breath.
Duck, and wild duck, the adjective
tells; the small sustainer's breath
took her surprised by tameness into
that dive. . . .

Structured in love to the wild, the
wild thing by its nature
can be topped by tameness, by quick
tameness beguiled.
But it answers with death. Because
the creature
though caught, though owned, though
penned, is wild. Wild.

Many of these are travel poems in the best sense: not just accurate descriptions of Greece or Mexico, but rich with implications about the spirit of a particular place, and of the human spirit in general. The jacket blurb talks about Jacobsen's "joy" and "optimism," but I sense little of that here; rather a stern moral Catholicism permeates her poetry:

What small
metaphors we set
ourselves: the three-inch flinching
eye, the three-inch tyrant
heart, that took the day and all
adventures in. Or
the heart quailing and the savage
eye: they can feel
the wind, the heart hear
sounds: now, small instruments, hush:
beat softly, heart, shutter yourself,
eye:
contract and tell your size
in sleep. Sizes are games. What
size is just
to hold
God's windy light,
the small dry tick of hell?

Jacobsen's art is subtle, controlled, dense, unlike Auden's sharp wit (though there is some good satire in "Birdsong of the Lesser Poet" and "A Reason of Numbers") or Nolan's jazzy rhythms and surreal images. She is a quiet, deep poet whose quietness contains and controls powerful and often outraged feelings:

On My Island

they kill mongooses. Always, before
they club
the trapped head, a formal greeting
is offered:
"Good morning, Mr. Mongoose."

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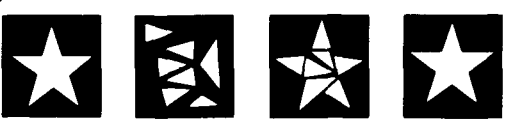

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If they struck in silence, a sharp-
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would come for them: feral, affronted
to have been anonymous,
unidentified,
unsaluted. After good morning and
the courteous
title, if not the beast, his spirit,
is appeased.

A man as murderer explained his
situation's
anonymity: They didn't say, man,
he said,
or woman, or child: he said, they
just said
dead mongooses—no, communists.
They didn't
say anything about age, or anything.
So he never
thought to say, Good morning,
child.

Peter Meinke

Peter Meinke, *poet and critic, teaches English at Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida.*

Rich Literature

Black Fiction by Roger Rosenblatt

(Harvard University Press; $9.50)

Immersed in research, one has the impression that literary criticism far exceeds original works. The exception to this is Afro-American literature. There are not enough specialized book-length works of criticism that supply material more substantial than plot summaries and chronologies of one black author following the next. Roger Rosenblatt's *Black Fiction* helps to fill this gap.

Black American writing is comparatively "new," most of it having appeared out of necessity after the Civil War when proscriptions against black literacy began to be lifted. Time is perhaps not as important, however, as a problem inherent in black literature itself: it is difficult to theorize about black literature, particularly if the critic is white, because of the necessity to understand and analyze the political-historical *reality* out of which it comes. The tension between "art for art's sake" and art as a political force is always present; black art is created within an explosive political context. Rosenblatt is influenced by this debate and though he does not always manage to resolve the tension, he has written an admirably perceptive work.

In his introduction Rosenblatt makes a distinction between issues of literary and social import that are often raised about black writing. These distinctions, I think, are largely false, but are partially explained by Rosenblatt's assertion that black literature does not have its own esthetic. There *is* a black esthetic and a part of that esthetic is the ability to incorporate supposedly extra-literary elements into a whole work of art that is compromised neither by artistic nor by political priorities. Rosenblatt never clarifies what he understands the term "black esthetic" to mean, and perhaps his definition differs from the one I have offered, yet he believes that an investigation of the literature will disprove its existence. On the contrary his own study seems to corroborate the existence of a black esthetic because it recognizes that the works share a uniquely black artistic vision.

Rosenblatt's approach to black fiction is based upon the thesis that the works are characterized by a cyclic pattern of events, determined by the Afro-American historical experience. Because racial oppression is a constant, the circumstances of black fictional characters' lives do not change appreciably from beginning to end. If change occurs at all, it happens internally, within the psyche of the hero. Instead of an everyman there is an "everyworld" that acts as a universal, antagonistic force.

Blacks are neither typical heroes nor anti-heroes because the dangers they face are too harsh to be romanticized and too tangible to be symbolic. Writes Rosenblatt: "It is not that the enemies of modern white heroes are less oppressive in terms of what the heroes feel, but these enemies, even when externalized, are theoretical and abstract. Whereas the enemies of the black heroes exist within history . . . most of the time, The Whale seeks them."

Although it is not a startling conception, Rosenblatt uses this cyclic theory to say very important things about the works he interprets. He believes that black fiction is essentially a tragic literature and emphasizes the nightmarish, upside-down quality of black experience: "the axiom of black fiction is . . . that to be crazy is to be sane in a mad situation." The perfect example is the black scholar in *Native Son* who is locked up with Bigger because he has seen through the madness, has discovered the key to the insanity of white people's behavior.

Rosenblatt terms this inversion "the element of reversal of reason which extends to every aspect of black fiction." The trick "mirror" of white values superimposed upon black life can distort everything; what is good becomes either bad or meaningless. For example the question of whether "the act of learning, formal or otherwise, is an act of improvement," is constantly asked in the literature since too much of the *wrong* kind of knowledge can lead the hero to disaster. Even humor has a paradoxical function of serving "as an instrument of perception, as a way of looking critically at a reality which is not funny."

Rosenblatt's choice of novels is excellent; they are linked to each other by content and not merely by epoch or the supposed racial philosophy of their authors. Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God,* Ann Petry's *Country Place* and Chester Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him Go* are given the serious attention they merit. In the chapter entitled "Exceptional Laughter" Rosenblatt cleverly pairs Langston Hughes' "Simple Stories" with Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land* to show the ingenious way humor can be used to deal with a situation that is far from comic. He writes that although *Manchild* is the autobiographical account of an individual "it also sits squarely within three prominent American literary traditions: American folk humor, the American success story, and the American Gothic, the tale of horror." This statement points to one of the most significant tasks that Rosenblatt undertakes; relating the traditions of black American to white American fiction. The purpose of his comparisons is not to suggest that the traditions are interchangeable, but to show that it is impossible to comprehend American literature (culture and history) as a whole if one knows nothing of the countercultural critique that black artists provide. Rosenblatt's discussion of novels with white characters written by black authors exemplifies how reveal-

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ing this approach can be.

Rosenblatt's cyclic theory is ultimately pessimistic. Although he says that black heroes can be hopeful, the picture he paints of black life in a white world is essentially hopeless. Rosenblatt correctly notes that quite often in black fiction the "hero vanishes," is either erased by violence or chooses to erase himself by relinquishing identity and sinking into invisibility. Nevertheless his closing statement that "he starts out wishing to be free, and realizes his freedom in self-disintegration" seems unduly bleak, especially when one considers the positive perspectives engendered by the cultural and political movements of the last decade. Admittedly it is poetry and not fiction that has been at the forefront of this ferment. Rosenblatt is accurate in his assessment of works written mostly before 1965.

In a new literature, though, there is much to look forward to. Black fiction is not moribund and can provide insights unavailable from other literary sources. Optimism certainly arises from the fact that there are critics like Rosenblatt who are capable of providing the rich interpretations that a rich literature deserves.

Barbara Smith

BARBARA SMITH, *formerly book editor of* The National Observer, *lives in Boston and teaches English at Emerson College.*

Recent Fiction

Dog Soldiers
by Robert Stone

(Houghton Mifflin; $8.95)

Robert Stone's first novel, *A Hall of Mirrors*, was a baggy, zany affair, filled with goodies like "a California of the mind." *Dog Soldiers* is anything but zany; it is tight and, although exciting, grim. Whereas the texture of *A Hall of Mirrors* was hallucinogenic like its characters' grass, *Dog Soldiers* owes its insistent rhythm to heroin adiction and a kind of accelerated greed which are the book's subjects.

The plot is simple: Converse, a freelance reporter in Vietnam, sees his chance to score by dealing heroin. He passes three kilos to his gun-freak buddy, Hicks, who's to smuggle it to Marge Converse in California, who in turn will sell it to American dealers. They stand to make a fortune. Alas, the cops, also into dealing, get wise. Hicks flees into the mountains with Marge, now high on dilaudid. The cop Antheil and his goons drag Converse along in pursuit. At each turn in the plot, the stakes rise: for a finale a whole fantastic mountainside, the hideout home of a psychedelic guru and old friend, explodes like a sacred mushroom. The friends try to look out for each other, but only the Converses and Antheil, with his sinister totalitarian name, survive.

Dog Soldiers raises several old-fashioned questions about the nature of fiction. First, the old dungheap question. Not for nothing does Converse describe his heroin as "merry little shit." All the characters' lives are sordid, violent and grim, relieved only (if at all) by unpleasant cynicism. If Converse gives up dealing it's only to save his skin. None of them is interesting except as a new subspecies, the counterculture turned ratty and sour. They deserve their own misery; they are addicted to it.

Perhaps Stone wants to make some sweeping indictment of America. Perhaps he is a moralist of the Vietnam war. Converse and Hicks, after all, learned their toughness and cynicism in Vietnam.

> *There were moral objections to children being blown out of sleep to death on a filthy street. And to their being burned to death by jellied petroleum. . . . And moral objections to people spending their lives shooting scag. . . . If the world is going to contain elephants pursued by flying men, people are just naturally going to want to get high. So there, Converse thought, that's the way it's done. He had confronted a moral objection and overridden it.*

The implication is, of course, that moral objections are not so easily overridden. The passage further implies, as do flashbacks to Vietnam, that the war, because it was immoral, contaminated ordinary fellows like Converse so that they sold out to scag and money. Moreover, and especially in Hicks' case, the American addiction to violence, the embrace of weaponry, produced the

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Vietnam war, dope addiction, smuggling, and police brutality and corruption. It's an easy message—even if it may be true.

The trouble is, the characters in the novel all deserve what they get. The children blown out of sleep to death are merely a formal gesture, a nod toward what we all viewed for years on TV with dinner. None of the victims is made real. Marge is the closest thing to a victim we see, fed drugs and dragged around by men, but she is so much a spoiled brat that it's hard to work up sympathy for her. Unlike the Vietnamese children these people could choose better lives. If there are moral objections to the war or to American life the book fails to make them. Where everyone deals, no one suffers. It's hard to care very much about Hicks' vaguely Christlike death or about Converse's slightly redeemed survival. Who feels the pain when Antheil's thugs press Converse's face down on an electric burner? "'I am afraid,' Converse reasoned, 'therefore I am.'" Greed and fear do not make a man.

But they do make a plot. Despite my profound moral disgust at this novel, my utter inability to sympathize with the characters, and my suspicion that my good liberal notion that the Vietnam war is as American as apple pie is cheaply manipulated, I have to admit I read the book straight through, addictively flipping the pages. Like James Dickey's *Deliverance*, to which similar objections might be made, this novel relies brilliantly on suspense: Will they make it? Who will kill whom? For the the moment, at least *while you read*, these questions are paramount; they take precedence over What does it mean? and Is it art? Here, then, is the second issue *Dog Soldiers* raises. How important is plot, that excited concatenation of events, in the final assessment of a novel? What does it mean to be contemptuous of the characters and skeptical of a book's morality and yet to enjoy the *reading*.

Because these questions are unanswerable, *Dog Soldiers* compels a grudging admiration. It may even be that the reader's addiction to the plot is a counterpart as real as sympathy to the character's violence, greed, and fear. Suspense is the reader's scag.

Joan Joffe Hall

JOAN JOFFE HALL *is on leave this year from the University of Connecticut at Storrs.*

Dr. Heart: A Novella and Other Stories by Eleanor Clark

(Pantheon; $7.95)

Although these stories range over a period of 37 years, they are related thematically and stylistically. Eleanor Clark is an obsessive writer, despite her cool awareness of human frailties, and she returns again and again to "the scene of the crime."

She is interested in the "heartlessness" we all possess. She does not locate the sources for such lack of responsibility—to use one of her favorite words—but she sees it brutally dividing generations, cultures and lovers.

Life is a constant, ironic struggle. Thus in "A Summer in Puerto Rico," one of her earlier stories, she looks at such scenes as the following:

> *The other night there was a vicious fight between a spider and a kind of beetle. The beetle had been flying hectically around the light, became dizzy perhaps, or worn-out by the irresistible attraction of the hot bulb, and suddenly fell on its back in the corner, where it lay waving its legs in a hopeless effort to turn right side up. The spider, who has a den just above the floor in the corner, emerged, spun a thread around the beetle and very slowly began pulling him toward the wall.*

The lengthy description continues until she informs us that "this scene, like the view from the window, is always new."

Her natural descriptions—she is, after all, one of our best travel writers—demonstrate her abiding concerns. She gives us so many fighting insects, goats and flies that we accept them as symbols of our inner violence. Her story ends with "first degree murder," but she does not have to discuss it. The understatement is clearly prepared for by scrupulously presented wars of nature.

Clark creates a dream world in such stories as "The Ball," but even here she pursues the "strange sleeping danger." Her heroine longs to go to a ball, to some good, ceremonial event, but she discovers that the figures at the ball are grotesque "mistakes." She is afraid; she loses her hopeful expectations. She is, oddly, like the beetle—she is worn out by "irresistible attractions."

Attracted, apparently, to drifters who try to go along with the tide, Eleanor Clark recognizes that such passivity, even if "cultivated," is dangerous. Tom, in "Dr. Heart," the short novel, travels to Europe to complete his thesis on "S.," a heroic writer. But he is so unsure of his goals—except to follow in the master's footsteps—that he soon wanders, changing his mind every few pages. At one point he decides to "let go," to become an "object" in a contemporary French novel; he contemplates "auto-paralysis, and something he had decided to call equivaluation whereby nothing was more important than anything else." He is, if you will, the dazed beetle.

Dr. Heart is an animal physician. He tries at all times to control the situation; he works steadily and refuses to drift. His sense of dedication, his responsibility to suffering creatures, his "heart"—these things are opposed to Tom's passive nature: "that he was a man of sympathy, too, there could be no doubt; he had obviously trained himself long ago not to waste time or words over it. . . ." Clark subtly counterpoints the values of Tom and Dr. Heart, and, of course, American and French culture, so that we understand the limitations of the young man. At the same time she maintains that both men are ultimately imprisoned in their life-styles. There is no happy ending or "conversion," there is only the sense of loss. The last thing we see is a page of Tom's drowned thesis.

"The Fish" is only a few pages long; it conveys, however, the deep, existential awareness of death. A child stares at the dead fish in the supermarket. He is attracted to it because it is dead in a "peculiar way": it lies "straight up and down, resting on its nose on the bottom of the tank. . . ."

Although the mother, who is the narrator—Clark often uses a narrator—notices her child staring at the fish, she belongs to another world. She cannot share childish, fresh perceptions; she is caught by the noisy attractions of the market. There is, again, enclosure in separate countries of the mind.

I do not want to reveal the ending of this story, or to belabor its juxtapositions of age, consciousness and manners, but I think that it underlines Clark's preoccupations. It is superficially "routine"—what could be more routine than a shopping expedition in the supermarket?—but it is also terrifying as it suggests, along with all the other stories,

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that life is full of unpredictable, often heartless, violence. It ends appropriately with tears; sympathy triumphs briefly. Knowing the conclusion of other stories, we sense that such reconciliation will soon disappear and the cycle begin again.

Irving Malin

IRVING MALIN *teaches at CCNY. He is the co-editor of the forthcoming* The Achievement of William Styron *and editor of the forthcoming* The Achievement of Carson McCullers.

Kenneth Evett on art

Jim Nutt

Jim Nutt appears on the contemporary art scene as a sport and free spirit. His recent exhibition at the Whitney Museum in New York City was an idiosyncratic offering of paintings that were at once unorthodox and conventional, funny and grim, high-style and vernacular, repulsive and beguiling. Nutt's mixed assortment of comic book jokes and social satire probably won't win him membership in the National Academy. And it no doubt brought down the wrath of those hide-bound New York tastemakers whose historic and esthetic horizons are bounded by pontifical formalist strictures. However it should have appealed to anybody with a sense of humor, and it ought to have cheered those old-fashioned viewers who still believe in traditional continuity and the open iconographic possibilities that reside in drawing and painting on flat surfaces.

Nutt is a free-wheeling eclectic. Bits of Bosch and Miro, microscope photography, funny-paper cartoons, surrealist fantasies, Seurat's weird frames, outhouse graffiti, medieval murals of Tuscany, Byzantine icons and pinball machine decorations are all evident in his work. Despite Nutt's omnivorous borrowing, he remains an original. His frank interest in the tits, slits, wrinkles, balls, hair, erections and flesh of human creatures comes from the same native tradition of adolescent candor as those two unblinking literary pubescents, Holden Caulfield and Jack the Bear. But no matter how lewd and low-down Nutt's metamorphic freaks may appear, they somehow maintain an aura of likable innocence as they peer from the corners or trot across the stage of his pictures. Nutt uses the threat of outlandish pornographic surprises in the way Joyce Carol Oates uses the threat of violence in her novels. That method keeps the viewer warily on his toes and acts as a foil for the artist's humor and contrasting visual divertissements.

Yet for all his iconographic extravagance, Nutt is a responsible designer. He pays attention to the four corners and flat surface of the picture plane, and while casually flaunting conventional notions of "high-art" drawings, disposes his accents, weights and sequences with careful precision. His formal vocabulary consists of banal curves, crude pop art contours, compulsive funky ornamentation and puppet stage space, yet he arranges these unpromising elements with his own strange sense of formal integrity;

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in Nutt's work the conjunction of imagery and abstract means that are equally perverse makes for a unified and distinctive personal expression.

Faithful disciples of the New York school of painting are far too involved in the monster-breeding competitions and feral vendettas of the art jungle to afford the detachment that humor requires. Many of them are still acting out one or another of those stereotype roles of mid-20th century American art mythology: the artist as emotionally pure know-nothing natural force (Pollock) or the artist as metaphysical, minimal pursuit (Reinhardt). Some devoutly contemplate the mercantile success stories of those operator-collector-merchants like Scull, Geldzahler and Castelli whose shrewd market maneuvers reflect the cultural and esthetic values of the '60s and early '70s. These contradictory American myths either foster unrealistic commercial ambitions or impose a sentimental Judeo-Christian puritanism on creative freedom. All are inimical to laughter.

The cool, anti-art japes and games of pop art made fun of formalist orthodoxies, but those gestures now seem more frivolous or cute than funny. But Nutt's work is genuinely funny, and is therefore to be taken seriously. Second-City and West Coast influences, along with his own odd, independent vision, gave his work a strong, indigenous, satiric bite. While it may be premature to make comparisons with Beardsley or Caillot, Nutt stands as an inventive image maker, a sly observer of our cultural and sexual preoccupations and a natural joker. Equipped with these unusual talents he comes out of the west as an amused, dissident Lochinvar, whose intentional or unwitting move is to challenge the sacrosanct canons that dominate contemporary critical judgment. By bringing the Nutt show to New York, the Whitney not only introduced a little fresh air into that inbred atmosphere; it also gave encouragement to personal and regional creative independence throughout the land.

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Fine Print

Leftovers

Doris Grumbach

Books left on my shelves after the Christmas column suffered not from lack of excellence but from lack of space to give them their due. A few were so good that I cannot help mentioning them now as worth your attention and money, long after the spirit of giving has probably died under the weight of enormous bills. I recommend them because they happen to be worthwhile books for you to consider giving to *yourself.*

Everett Shinn (1863-1953) by Edith DeShazo (Clarkson N. Potter; $15) came out four days before Christmas, a brave way for this publisher to make clear it was more of a book for the years to come than a produced-for-Christmas volume. A "detached" member of the American Ashcan School, Shinn was an extraordinarily talented man who wrote plays, had a small theater in his home on Waverly Place in New York (where the Waverly Players performed his plays of sometimes dubious literary quality). He will be remembered as an artist of New York who was "fascinated with the city." The picture most people will remember with nostalgic affection is his oil, "Washington Square." The volume's text is pedestrian and scrappy but informative, its reproductions are fine, especially those in color.

The University of California Press rushed their handsome **Egon Schiele's Portraits** by Alessandra Comini ($65) to the stores and to the press barely in time for Christmas (even going so far as to airmail all bookstore orders, their publicity people wrote), but my copy arrived too late for Christmas recommendation. What a treasure this justifiably expensive volume is! Schiele was born in 1890 and died in the 1918 flu epidemic, and shared with Freud and others "a preoccupation with the psyche" that took the artistic form of an obsession with self-portraits. He produced them in every medium—reflecting his emotional states as they related to his extraordinary private life, "states which are intimately linked with the evolution of his radical idiom. The row of changing identities which Schiele provided himself and which he projected on canvas with obsessive regularity" makes a valuable study. Dr. Comini writes further: "See within the larger context of fin-de-siècle Austria, an analysis of the cultural influences which shaped Schiele's art can help explain the emergence of a distinctly Viennese, as opposed to German, Expressionism."

In 14 years Schiele produced an astonishing number of portraits. They are all here, studied with scholarly understanding and genuine insight into the problems of his age, his place, himself, his genius, which was at first called dementia praecox by critics and later, near his death, acknowledged to be uncommon talent. Rarely will you find a book that so well combines psychology, social history and the esthetics of art criticism.

Before Liveright surrendered itself to the protective embrace of Norton, it sent me galleys of two poets. The two slim volumes then arrived on our review shelves barely a week before Christmas. In case (a most likely one) they get lost in the shuffle, let me call your attention to **If I Could Sleep Deeply Enough** by Vassar Miller ($6.95;

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$2.50 paper). She is a Texan who has published two previous volumes of poetry; the 40 or so short lyrics in this collection are distinguished by the ease with which she moves from political subjects to deeply religious ones to personal cries, yet she is not the conventional "spiritual" poet nor the customary confessional one. Her work is finely controlled and inevitable. Some lines from her "Posthumous Letter to Thomas Merton" will give you a taste of her subjects and their quality:

I might have asked you how to
bridge the gap
Between our two alonenesses, between
Yours, self-elected, freely chosen, and
Mine blindly blundered into from
the womb,
At first not even seen for what it was,
And then, once recognized, raged at,
kicked at,
And cursed.

Nancy Willard is a versatile young poet who has produced three other books of verse as well as a book of literary criticism and another of short stories, *Childhood of the Magician* (1973) which I very much admired. **Carpenter of the Sun** is her new collection of poetry. It displays a lovely wit that is rare among poets these days. I liked particularly her four poems based on sports headlines from newspapers—"Buffalo Climbs Out of Cellar," "Giant Streak Snarls Race"—and "Saints Lose Back":

And there was complacency in heaven
for the space of half an hour,
and God said, Let every saint lose
his back.

The poem goes on with its catalogue of considerations of the back, and ends with God still speaking:

O, my angels, my exalted ones,
consider the back,
consider how the other half lives.

There are other equally good lyrics in the book, all, as the writer of the jacket copy quite rightly notices, "filled with wit, charm, elegance, and magic."

I've been seeing the credit line "Bettmann Archives" under reproductions of old woodcuts, engravings, drawings and photographs since I can remember, so it came as a surprise to learn, from **The Good Old Days—They Were Terrible** (Random House; $10, $4.95 paper) that Otto L. Bettmann is alive and well, and has produced this intended-to-shock reconstruction of the old days in America, which turn out, in his graphic series of illustrations, to be not so much the "ebullient, carefree America, the fun and charm of the Gilded Age, the Gay Nineties" of the privileged few as, for the average man, unremitting hardships. Bettmann reviews this desperate condition in such areas as travel, leisure, education ("No lickin', no larnin' ") eating and drinking, health (19th century medicine will make you grateful you were not born earlier when smallpox, diphtheria, typhoid and yellow fever were a constant threat and when medicine did little to alleviate pain),

Boys Working in a Glass Factory, 5pm to 3 am. Bettmann Archives

crime, strikes, etc. There are terrible pictures of lynchings, of crime in the streets, immigrant life, city parks which "became a refuge for loafers, bums and thieves." Beaches were crowded, the ocean at Coney Island and along the Jersey shore was polluted with garbage dumped there, food was everywhere badly adulterated, prostitution raged: who said they were the good old days? "'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view," is the moral of Otto Bettmann's pictures.

There is more to **Should Trees Have Standing?** by Christopher D. Stone (William Kaufmann, Los Altos, Calif.) than the catchy title. A New York publicist insisted I read it ("not even our book," she wrote), and I'm grateful, because it is a moving and convincing description of what Aldo Leopold once called "the land ethic," the ethic that deals with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants that grow upon it. Stone surveys the once-unrecognized rights of children, the aged, aliens and minorities, all of whom are now in somewhat better condition because of the extension of legal rights to them. He proposes that we grant legal rights to "natural objects" in our environment—in fact, to the entire natural environment: rivers, trees and the living things that exist in and near them. Perhaps the most intriguing part of Prof. Stone's argument (he is a lawyer, philosopher, economist and humane man) is his critical examination of the age-old view that nature exists for men, and that "nature is a collection of useful senseless objects." The natural world can be saved for us only if we are able "to reach a heightened awareness of our own, and others' capacities in their mutual interplay." To do so, "we have to give up some psychic investment in our sense of separateness and specialness in the universe." If you agreed with me that *Small Is Beautiful* was an important book, you will be ripe for this one.

Kauffmann, *from page 22*

feel lucky to be living now and not then.

In Praise of Love (Morosco). English play, English star, American production. Terence Rattigan has been turning out neatly turned-out comedies and dramas since the 1930s and is still writing 1930s plays. He finds his little idea, for comedy or poignance, and he stitches his little script about it with considerable craft and no unnecessary nuisance. When the play starts at 8:00, you know that everything will be in order by 10:30, with time out for a smoke, and at least your intelligence will not have been insulted. (Remember *Separate Tables, The Browning Version, The Winslow Boy*, etc.)

In Praise of Love was produced in London as half of a Rattigan double bill (with Donald Sinden!). Presumably it was expanded to full length for Rex Harrison, whom it fits with Savile Row finish. Harrison is now the perfect

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Rattigan actor. What a comedown. He once was, or could have been, the perfect Shaw or Congreve or Sheridan or even Shakespeare actor. But at least this role is not a disaster like his attempt at lovableness in *Dr. Dolittle* or at physical farce in *A Flea in Her Ear.* Here Harrison is content to do a (very) minor version of Henry Higgins—a lofty, densely egocentric charmer. But how well he does it. You can see him eating up all the other actors on stage, even his co-star Julie Harris, simply by not looking at them much and justifying it with his one-man show. He times so perfectly (as when he realizes belatedly that the chess set with which he is playing is a new expensive gift), he inflects so delightfully (who else could still make us laugh at the line "Are you mad?"), and he fulfills the requirements of stage stardom so completely. That is, he says in effect, not "I hope I please you, ladies and gentlemen" but "How lucky you all are to be seeing me." And makes it stick.

The play? It's about a wife who has a terminal disease and how she and her husband keep their knowledge of it from each other. He is a famous literary critic. (Writing for which London weekly, I wonder, in that *luxe* Jo Mielziner house?) She is Esthonian born, a former resistance heroine 30 years later. (The part was conceived for Ingrid Bergman.) None of that really matters. T. Rattigan, Gentlemen's Tailor, has made a decent suit for a good customer.

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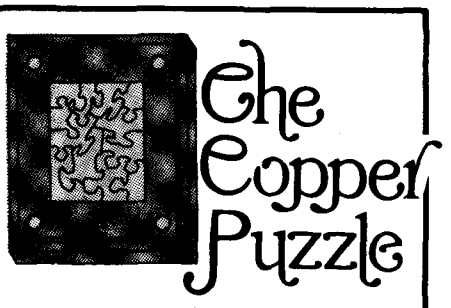

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